United Nations

Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the work of its thirty-seventh session

General Assembly
Official Records • Fifty-second Session
Supplement No. 16 (A/52/16)

Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the work of its thirty-seventh session

General Assembly
Official Records · Fifty-second Session
Supplement No. 16 (A/52/16)

United Nations · New York, 1997

NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

ISSN 0255-2213

[Original: English]

[4 August 1997]

CONTENTS

Chapter		Paragraphs	Page
ABBREVIATIONS			vi
I.	ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION	1 - 10	1
	A. Agenda	2 - 3	1
	B. Election of officers	4	1
	C. Attendance	5 - 8	1
	D. Documentation	9	3
	E. Adoption of the report of the Committee	10	3
II.	REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS	11 - 19	4
	Reform of the United Nations and its impact on the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	11 - 19	4
III.	PROGRAMME QUESTIONS	20 - 315	6
	A. Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999	20 - 289	6
	Section 1. Overall policy-making direction and coordination	58 - 61	11
	Section 2. Political affairs	62 - 74	12
	Section 3. Peacekeeping operations and special missions	75 - 88	16
	Section 4. Peaceful uses of outer space	89 - 92	19
	Section 6. Legal affairs	93 - 101	19
	Section 7. Policy coordination and sustainable development	102 - 113	21
	Section 8. Africa: New Agenda for Development	114 - 122	23
	Section 9. Economic and social information and policy analysis	123 - 128	24

CONTENTS (continued)

Chapter			Paragraphs	Page
	Section 10.	Development support and management services	129 - 135	25
	Section 11A.	Trade and development	136 - 146	26
	Section 11B.	International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO	147 - 151	28
	Section 12.	Environment	152 - 159	28
	Section 13.	Human settlements	160 - 170	30
	Section 14.	Crime control	171 - 178	31
	Section 15.	International drug control	179 - 185	33
	Section 16.	Economic and social development in Africa	186 - 193	35
	Section 17.	Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific	194 - 200	36
	Section 18.	Economic development in Europe .	201 - 205	37
	Section 19.	Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean	206 - 212	38
	Section 20.	Economic and social development in Western Asia	213 - 216	39
	Section 21.	Regular programme of technical cooperation	217 - 224	39
	Section 22.	Human rights	225 - 237	41
	Section 23.	Protection of and assistance to refugees	238 - 246	46
	Section 24.	Palestine refugees	247 - 249	48
	Section 25.	Humanitarian assistance	250 - 258	48
	Section 26.	Public information	259 - 267	49
	Section 27.	Administrative services	268 - 276	51
	Section 28.	Internal oversight	277 - 282	53
	Section 29.	Jointly financed administrative activities	283 - 286	54

CONTENTS (continued)

Chapter		Paragraphs	Page
	Section 31. Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance	287 - 289	55
B.	Evaluation	290 - 315	56
	1. In-depth evaluation of the programme on statistics	290 - 294	56
	2. In-depth evaluation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs	295 - 303	57
	3. Topics for future in-depth evaluation	304 - 307	59
	4. Triennial review of the in-depth evaluation of the United Nations programme on social development	308 - 310	60
	5. Review of the United Nations Environment Programme and the administrative practices of its secretariat, including the United Nations Office at Nairobi	311 - 315	60
IV.	COORDINATION QUESTIONS	316 - 359	62
A.	Report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination	316 - 338	62
B.	Revised System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development and implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa	339 - 359	65
V.	REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT	360 - 369	69
	Coordination of policy and programming frameworks for more effective development cooperation	360 - 369	69
VI.	CONSIDERATION OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE	370 - 372	71

Annexes

I.	Agenda for the thirty-seventh session of the Committee	74
II.	List of documents before the Committee at its thirty-seventh session	75

ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
MERCOSUR	Common Market of the Southern Cone
MINUGUA	United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala
OAU	Organization of African Unity
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDOF	United Nations Disengagement Observer Force
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNMOGIP	United Nations Military Observer group in India and Pakistan
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNTSO	United Nations Truce Supervision Organization
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

1. The Committee for Programme and Coordination held its organizational session for 1997 (1st meeting) at United Nations Headquarters on 12 May 1997 and its substantive session from 9 June to 3 July 1997. It held 28 meetings (2nd to 28th meetings) and a number of informal consultations.

A. Agenda

2. The agenda for the thirty-seventh session, adopted by the Committee at its 1st meeting, is reproduced in annex I to the present report.

3. In adopting the agenda, the Committee, in accordance with the decision taken at its organizational meeting for 1997, decided to consider at its thirty-seventh session the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) entitled "Coordination of policy and programming frameworks for more effective development cooperation" (A/51/636-E/1996/104, annex and A/52/115-E/1997/47, annex). The Committee also decided that the report of JIU entitled "Common services at United Nations Headquarters" (A/51/686, annex), as well as the comments of the Secretary-General thereon (A/51/686/Add.1, annex) and the observations made by JIU on the comments of the Secretary-General (A/51/686/Add.2, annex) should be considered under the relevant section of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 under agenda item 4 (a), Programme questions: proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

B. Election of officers

4. At its 1st and 2nd meetings, on 12 May and 9 June 1997, the Committee elected the following officers by acclamation:

Chairman: Mr. Wolfgang Stockl (Germany)

Vice-Chairmen: Mr. Amr Nour (Egypt)
Mr. Anuson Chinvanno (Thailand)
Mr. Zbigniew Szymanski (Poland)

Rapporteur: Mrs. Sharon Brennen-Haylock (Bahamas)

C. Attendance

5. The following States members of the Committee were represented:

Argentina
Austria
Bahamas
Benin
Brazil
Cameroon
China
Congo
Egypt
France
Germany
Ghana
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Japan
Mexico
Nicaragua
Nigeria
Pakistan
Poland
Republic of Korea
Romania

Russian Federation
Thailand
Togo
Trinidad and Tobago
Ukraine
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United States of America
Uruguay
Zimbabwe

The Democratic Republic of the Congo was not represented at the session and the two vacant seats from the Western European and Other States Group remain to be filled.

6. The following States Members of the United Nations were represented by observers:

Algeria
Armenia
Australia
Belgium
Bolivia
Canada
Colombia
Costa Rica
Cuba
Ecuador
Guatemala
Honduras
India
Ireland
Italy
Morocco
Namibia
New Zealand
Norway
Panama
Papua New Guinea
Peru
Philippines
Portugal
Saudi Arabia
Tunisia
Uganda
United Republic of Tanzania

7. The following regional commissions and specialized agencies were represented:

Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Regional Commissions New York Office

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

8. Also present at the session were the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services, the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, the Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, the Controller, the Executive Secretary of ECLAC and senior officials of the United Nations Secretariat. At the invitation of the Committee, Mr. Kuyama Sumihiro, Inspector of JIU, participated in the work of the Committee.

D. Documentation

9. The list of documents before the Committee at its thirty-seventh session is set out in annex II.

E. Adoption of the report of the Committee

10. At its 28th meeting, on 3 July 1997, the Committee adopted the draft report on the work of the Committee at its thirty-seventh session (E/AC.51/1997/L.4 and Add.1-43).

II. REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Reform of the United Nations and its impact on the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

11. At its 5th and 6th meetings, on 11 and 12 June 1997, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the note by the Secretary-General on the reform of the United Nations and its impact on the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (E/1997/5).

12. The Committee was informed that the Commission had developed a process of prioritization of the regular programme of work for the biennium 1998-1999. Pursuant to Commission resolution 553 (XXVI), an ad hoc working group open to all States members of ECLAC was established with the mandate to determine, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, the priorities of the programme of work of the Commission and to propose strategic orientations for its future activities. The first meeting of the ad hoc working group took place at Santiago from 29 to 31 July 1996.

Discussion

13. Delegations noted that ECLAC had begun to implement a set of reform and institutional development measures well in advance of the recent reform drive in the United Nations system. The reform and modernization efforts in ECLAC included, inter alia, rationalization of the functioning of intergovernmental forums, strategic planning and training for medium- and senior-level managers.

14. Delegations referred to the 2nd meeting of the ad hoc working group, held in New York on 5 June 1997, at which it reviewed the results of the priority-setting exercise and considered the outline on the new pilot management scheme to be implemented by ECLAC following consideration and approval by member States of the Commission, and taking into account the statements made by the members of the ad hoc working group during that meeting. Delegations noted that the main thrust of the pilot project was to decentralize authority in certain areas of human resources and budget management in order to improve efficiency and efficacy and to strengthen accountability.

15. Delegations expressed general support for the thrust of the reform efforts initiated by ECLAC and congratulated the Commission for being selected to initiate a pilot project on the new management scheme in the United Nations. Most delegations stressed that ECLAC continued to play a crucial role in the economic growth, development and regional integration in Latin America and the Caribbean.

16. Delegations also expressed favourable opinions about the usefulness of the priority-setting exercise. Some noted that it should serve as an example to other regions. While expressing support for the reform measures being undertaken by ECLAC, including the priority-setting exercise, one delegation indicated that participants in the prioritization exercise would have benefited greatly from the provision of information on the financial implications of the various activities listed in the work programme of the Commission. It was emphasized that such information would have contributed to a greater correlation between stated priority activities and the level of resources allocated for their implementation.

17. One delegation emphasized the importance of ensuring the necessary adjustments to the programme of work of ECLAC, in keeping with the recommendations of the Committee contained in subparagraphs 184 (d) to (f) of its report on the second part of its thirty-sixth session.[1] That delegation also welcomed the current dialogue that Caribbean countries and the ECLAC headquarters secretariat had embarked upon, with a view to exploring ways of addressing adequately the concerns and interests of the Caribbean subregion.

18. Some delegations informed the Committee that the representatives of the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR) and the countries of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Region had met recently at Bucharest to discuss ways and means of enhancing cooperation in fields of common interest.

Conclusions and recommendations

19. The Committee took note of the note by the Secretary-General (E/1997/5).

III. PROGRAMME QUESTIONS

A. Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999

20. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, the first biennial programme budget within the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, was introduced by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management at the 9th meeting of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, on 16 June 1997.

21. The Committee was informed that the proposed programme budget reflected the efforts made to meet the concerns of all Member States and to ensure the implementation of mandated activities in a most cost-effective manner. The Secretariat had formulated a programme budget after intense review and scrutiny by programme managers of their mandates, bearing in mind the resources available, the results to be achieved, the intended beneficiaries and the time-frame within which to implement the activities. The level of the resources proposed, at $2,583 million at 1998-1999 prices, was lower than that of the revised appropriations for 1996-1997 and within the outline approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/220 of 18 December 1996. In the context of a significant budget reduction compared with the biennium 1996-1997, the emphasis was placed on ensuring the continuation of all mandated programmes combined with sustained attempts at keeping administrative costs down. This had been achieved through reorganization, as necessary, of organizational structures and improving methods of work, with consequent redistribution of functions and responsibilities of staff.

22. The Committee was informed that the distribution of resources had been guided by the priority areas as determined by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/220, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security, the promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development, in accordance with its relevant resolutions and the outcomes of recent United Nations conferences, the development of Africa, the promotion of human rights, the effective coordination of humanitarian assistance, the promotion of international justice and law, disarmament, drug control, crime prevention and combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

23. The Committee was informed that resources released over the next two bienniums from reducing administration and other non-programme areas would be redirected to substantive programme areas in the economic, social and related fields.

24. The Committee was informed that the present programme budget proposal did not take into account the consolidation of the departments in the economic and social fields, the streamlining of services for intergovernmental processes, the reorientation of public information to which the Secretary-General referred in his letter of 17 March 1997 to the President of the General Assembly (A/51/829) or the reform measures to be announced by the Secretary-General on 16 July. Budgetary implications of those measures would be the subject of revised estimates to be submitted to the Assembly at its fifty-second session.

25. At its 9th, 10th and 12th meetings, on 16 to 18 June, the Committee considered part one of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999. At its 27th meeting, on 30 June, the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on the impact of approved savings measures on the implementation of mandated programmes and activities (A/C.5/51/53).

Discussion

26. Some delegations expressed satisfaction that the Secretary-General's budget proposal remained within the budget outline as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/220.

27. Some delegations were of the view that a reduction in the budget should not be perceived as meaning a reduced role for the Organization and that such a reduction must not affect the implementation of all mandated programmes and activities, especially in the field of international and regional cooperation for development. They stressed that revitalization of the Organization should not automatically mean a reduction in its programme and activities. Several delegations were of the view that the proposed programme budget reflected the fiscal discipline that was being experienced by many Governments at the national level and therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's proposals. Many delegations also welcomed his intention to continue his efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of programme delivery. Some delegations noted with concern that the distribution of resources among budget sections did not reflect adequately the priority areas of activities of the Organization for 1998-2001. A decline in extrabudgetary resources in priority areas compared with the previous biennium was also noted.

28. Some delegations reiterated their concern that the proposed programme budget did not include provisions for special missions. Several delegations reaffirmed that resource requirements should not be included in the proposed programme budget unless there were specific mandates for such special missions, as had already been decided by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/220. In this connection, some delegations pointed out that a report on issues related to the question of all additional expenditures referred to in paragraphs 10 and 11 of annex I to Assembly resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986, including those relating to the maintenance of peace and security, inflation and currency fluctuation, as requested by the Assembly in its resolution 51/220, would still have to be prepared.

29. A large number of delegations expressed concern about the number of posts proposed for abolition and the negative impact that might have on the capacity of the Organization to implement its programme of work fully. They stressed that the international character of the Organization must be maintained and that the principle of geographical balance must be observed. Some delegations stressed the importance of maintaining gender balance. A large number of delegations stressed that the Secretary-General should have included in his budget proposal all the posts he deemed necessary to ensure that the various departments of the Secretariat would be able to carry out the programmes and activities approved by the General Assembly without the need to resort to gratis personnel. They pointed out that this could easily have been achieved by simply reducing the number of posts he was proposing to abolish. Other delegations welcomed the proposed reduction in the overall number of posts. Some delegations expressed the view that every effort should be made to ensure that the abolition of posts would not adversely affect the entry level posts (P-1 to P-3) made available for the recruitment of junior staff through examinations.

30. Some delegations noted that the high vacancy levels currently experienced by the Secretariat would ensure that staff on board would not be adversely affected by the proposed abolition of approximately 900 posts. A number of delegations inquired as to the feasibility of achieving the proposed vacancy rates for 1998-1999, namely, 5 per cent for Professional staff and 2.5 per cent for General Service staff, given the level of post reduction. They noted, at

the same time, that the proposed vacancy rates for 1998-1999 were expected to reflect reality, returning to normalcy after the need to maintain higher rates than normal in 1996-1997, in order to achieve the required budget reductions. Many delegations stated that the vacancy rate should be seen as a budgeting tool, as it used to be before the current biennium, and not as a vacancy target that had to be reached during budget implementation.

31. Many delegations expressed concern at the change in the methodology applied to the uniform vacancy rate, which gave a wrong impression that a real increase in resources had been achieved. This could be seen in many sections of the budget, in particular the economic sections. Those delegations reiterated that the issue should be discussed at length when the Fifth Committee resumed its session.

32. Many delegations stressed that, in a period of downsizing, staff must be adequately trained to assume additional functions and responsibility and, in that connection, noted that resources for training had been proposed for increase. Some delegations noted that the proposed increase for staff training represented a sum of only $3 million and that the resources earmarked for staff training represented only 0.6 per cent of staff costs at present, and expressed the view that for the United Nations to spend less than 1 per cent of its staff costs on occupational and management training was too low for an organization of its size, and especially one with such a diversity of responsibilities.

33. Some delegations welcomed the emphasis now being placed by all offices on a programme of major maintenance of the premises of the Organization to address health and safety issues and the progressive deterioration of the buildings occupied by the Organization.

34. Many delegations expressed the view that since the Secretary-General had demonstrated his readiness to respond to the call by Member States to use scarce resources more effectively, it was now the turn of Member States to ensure that the Organization received adequate financial resources, in full, on time and without conditions, to enable it to carry out the mandates entrusted to it by Member States.

35. Several delegations expressed deep concern at the imbalance in the distribution of resources between subprogrammes in some sections. They also reaffirmed the need to establish priorities within subprogrammes.

36. One delegation expressed its hope that the norms that governed the programme budget would not be set aside again to meet a predetermined level of budget involving a significant reduction that had to be achieved in a limited amount of time.

37. A large number of delegations expressed the view that budgeting programmes and activities of the United Nations under a specific and predetermined ceiling was not an end in itself; mandates of the General Assembly and the relevant intergovernmental bodies should not be altered to reach a certain budget level at the expense of programmes and activities since programmes preceded the budget. Accordingly, those delegations stated, the Committee's main concern was to examine and ensure that mandated programmes and activities were duly reflected in the budget.

38. While welcoming the fact that the new format of the medium-term plan made it much easier to see the links between programmes and the resources required to implement them, some delegations expressed regret that the medium-term plan had

not given a clearer indication of the priorities of the Organization for the plan period. The same delegations noted that since virtually all activities of the United Nations had been given priority, it was difficult to take the necessary decisions in terms of resource allocation within the overall budget.

39. Several delegations stated that the Committee had examined and recommended programmes with the full understanding that outputs would be clearly and completely reflected in the programme budget to be implemented during the period of the medium-term plan. They noted, however, that the introduction stated that the Secretary-General's proposals had not taken into account the consolidation of departments in the economic and social fields, the streamlining of services for intergovernmental processes or the reorientation of public information, and that, in the absence of a complete picture, the current review by the Committee was incomplete. Nevertheless, those delegations understood that the three programmes in the economic and social fields would be fully translated into the new structural arrangements.

40. Several delegations expressed the view that the implementation of development programmes was of major importance for the Committee, given the fact that those programmes were included in the medium-term plan adopted by the General Assembly, and clarification was necessary as to how the mandates were to be fully reflected in the new consolidated structure of the three economic and social departments.

41. Some delegations were of the view that in the reorientation of the Department of Public Information due consideration should be paid to the mandates establishing the Department, in particular since it had been established by the General Assembly to render services in the area of public information to Member States. In that connection, the membership of the United Nations, in particular the developing countries, derived benefit from those services and remained interested in considering how those mandates were going to be pursued in the new reorientation.

42. Many delegations noted that additional information would be forthcoming from the Secretary-General on how savings to be achieved in the administrative area could be transferred to substantive programme areas in the economic, social and related fields. They expressed the view that the level of resources to be released by the proposed reduction of posts should be carefully examined, including the impact on programme delivery and on the institutional memory of the Organization. They also stressed that due regard should be given to the principle of equitable geographical representation in any exercise of staff reduction.

43. Some delegations noted that further reductions in the programme budget were anticipated following the reform process. Most delegations welcomed the reduction in non-programme costs and the increase, in 1998-1999, in the regular programme of technical cooperation to reflect the commitment of the Secretary-General to economic and social development.

44. A number of delegations pointed out that the transfer from the expenditure sections of jointly financed activities, except for the United Nations portion, was merely an accounting change and did not reflect a real reduction in the budget. Some delegations expressed the view that the change to net budgeting should not have been made.

45. Many delegations emphasized the importance of having information on the outputs deferred, postponed or curtailed in 1996-1997 and their disposition in

the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, as well as the programme performance report on the impact of approved savings measures on the implementation of mandated programmes and activities, in facilitating their deliberations on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

46. Some delegations observed that the programme budget coincided with the entry into the next millennium and wondered whether it was not appropriate to envisage special activities to meet the changing needs of the world community at that time.

47. During the consideration by the Committee of the Secretary-General's report on the impact of approved savings measures on the implementation of mandated programmes and activities (A/C.5/51/53), many delegations expressed deep concern at the discrepancy and contradictions between the assurances given to Member States that all mandated activities would be fully implemented at the level of resources requested for 1998-1999, on the one hand, and the content of the report of the Secretary-General, which clearly confirmed that implementation of mandated activities was facing serious problems, on the other. They reiterated that the Secretariat should resubmit a revised budget proposal that would allow the Secretariat to overcome the shortfall it actually faced and to enable it to implement fully all mandated programmes and activities.

48. Many delegations stressed that the savings measures should enhance efficiency and effectiveness and not undermine them. Furthermore, savings measures should reflect discipline and innovation and should not absolve Member States from discharging their treaty obligations.

49. One delegation felt that the impact of the $154 million reduction in the budget must have been offset by appreciation of the dollar and savings achieved by efficiency measures. The same delegation expressed the view that, on the one hand, the report had mentioned increased workload for the United Nations staff because of the vacancy rate, which affected programme delivery, while on the other, there was a proposal to reduce 1,182 posts. Some delegations inquired about the impact of the proposed reduction on the 1998-1999 budget.

50. Many delegations expressed regret that the Secretariat had not been in a position to provide it with budget sections 27C, Office of Human Resources Management, and 27E, Conference services, for its consideration.

Conclusions and recommendations

51. The Committee expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the Secretary-General to present a programme budget that appeared to be consistent with the outline approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/220, and noted that the programme budget reflected the structure of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, as approved by the Assembly in its resolution 51/219 of 18 December 1996, on the recommendation of the Committee.

52. The Committee noted that the total amount of resources requested by the Secretary-General was significantly lower than the revised appropriations for 1996-1997 and the Secretary-General's assurances that such a reduction would in no way affect the full implementation of all mandated activities during the biennium 1998-1999.

53. The Committee concluded that the delay in the presentation of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/51/53) did not allow the Committee to use it in an

in-depth evaluation of all sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 nor to identify in all cases the possible effects of the above-mentioned proposal. The Committee recommended to the General Assembly that it consider the proposed programme budget taking account of the report.

54. In accordance with its mandate, the Committee will decide at a resumed organizational session on its further consideration of the sections of the proposed programme budget that will be affected by reform measures after publication of the revised budget proposals.

55. The Committee stressed that financing of the programme budget, once approved by the General Assembly, must be assured.

56. The Committee expressed regret that the Secretariat was not in a position to provide it with budget sections 27C, Office of Human Resources Management, and 27E, Conference services, for its consideration.

57. The Committee recommended that every effort be made to ensure that the abolition of posts would not adversely affect the entry level posts (P-1 to P-3), which are made available for the recruitment of junior staff through examination.

Section 1. Overall policy-making, direction and coordination

58. At its 11th and 12th meetings, on 17 and 18 June 1997, the Committee considered section 1, Overall policy-making, direction and coordination, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

59. Many delegations supported the structure of the section. Other delegations expressed appreciation for the detailed presentation of activities in it.

60. Some delegations expressed concern at the proposed increases under consultants, contractual services, general operating expenses and furniture and equipment. Others stressed the importance of the functions of the President of the General Assembly and felt that adequate travel resources should be allocated to the Office of the President. Some delegations expressed concern at the increase in the provisions under travel proposed for the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. One delegation questioned the proposed reclassification from P-5 to D-1 of the post of the Executive Secretary of the External Board of Auditors and felt that the post could be maintained at its current level. Other delegations raised no objections to the proposals. One delegation expressed concern at the level of resources proposed for the Office of External Relations as compared with the resources allocated to certain priority areas. Some delegations queried the provision of resources for travel by members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination to the Joint Committee for Programme and Coordination/Administrative Committee on Coordination meetings, since those meetings had been abolished by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996. One delegation questioned the need for six weeks of meetings of the Committee for Programme and Coordination during 1998, which is a non-plan year. A large number of delegations supported the idea of retaining the Committee's sessions in accordance with the resolution that had established it.

Conclusions and recommendations

61. The Committee took note of the narrative of section 1, Overall policy-making, direction and coordination, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 and requested the Secretariat to include in the programme narrative a description of the functions of the Office of External Relations in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General as follows: after the last sentence of paragraph 1.41, the following text would be inserted:

> "The primary function of the Office is outreach, promotion and maintenance of the relations of the United Nations in civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the business world, academic institutions, foundations, professional associations, parliamentarians, trade unions and the religious community. Its work is complementary to that of the Department of Public Information. While the Department disseminates information to the press and other media and the general public, as well as providing services to non-governmental organizations associated with it, the Office of External Relations focuses on an in-depth relationship between key institutions of civil society and the Secretary-General. It chairs an interdepartmental working group that provides advice to the Secretary-General on his relationship with non-governmental organizations. It works closely with the speech writers and the Spokesmen for the Secretary-General and confers with Protocol in connection with requests and visits by leaders of civil society, but does not undertake protocol functions. In close cooperation and coordination with the Department of Public Information, the Office develops a communication strategy and core message that is consistent, compelling and well coordinated."

Section 2. Political affairs

62. At its 23rd meeting, on 26 June 1997, the Committee considered section 2, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

63. Some delegations expressed the opinion that it would be unnecessary to create subprogramme 5, and that the credits of that subprogramme should be allocated under section 1, Overall policy-making, direction and coordination. Several delegations expressed support for and reaffirmed the importance of activities of the section. Those delegations stressed in particular the importance of the programme of preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution and emphasized that efforts should be focused on preventive diplomacy before the conflicts escalated. Other delegations indicated that activities under subprogramme 1, Prevention, control and resolution of conflicts, could prevent the launching of peacekeeping operations. Those delegations, therefore, fully agreed with the narrative in paragraph 2.9, which indicated that the use of peaceful means to bring hostile parties to agreement were the most cost-effective ways by which the Organization could contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security and thus forestall the suffering and destruction that inevitably occurred when disputes degenerated into armed conflict.

64. In connection with subprogramme 2, Assistance and support to the Secretary-General in the political aspects of his relations with Member States, a number of delegations expressed concern about the merger of some of the regional

divisions and the advantage to be derived from changing the existing structure of the six regional divisions into four. Other delegations expressed concern at the reductions proposed and the elimination of posts under the subprogramme. Those delegations felt that the reductions might have an impact on the analytical abilities of the Department of Political Affairs in undertaking its programme of work. Other delegations welcomed the streamlining of the subprogramme. A number of delegations welcomed the strengthening of coordination between the United Nations and regional organizations, particularly in the settlement of conflicts.

65. One delegation inquired why provisions had not been made for activities relating to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in the subprogramme, particularly in the light of the recent resolution establishing cooperation between CARICOM and the United Nations, and requested information on the activities envisaged for CARICOM during the biennium. The same delegation inquired as to whether there was a cooperation agreement between the Commonwealth Secretariat and the United Nations, and if not, under what auspices were cooperation activities carried out.

66. Some delegations stressed that the functions of the proposed liaison office of the Department of Political Affairs in Addis Ababa should have been included in the budget proposal in a clear manner. They expressed concern that a department of the Secretariat, was - for the first time - establishing its own liaison office to be accredited to a regional organization and stressed that the practice was that only the Secretary-General should dispatch envoys, not Secretariat departments. Those delegations asked about the duplication of functions between the proposed Department of Political Affairs office in Kigali and the special arrangements between the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations concerning the Joint Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region. They expressed support for the idea of a Joint Special Envoy but cautioned against duplication with the proposed Addis Ababa liaison office and the officer of the Department of Political Affairs to be accredited to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) office in Kigali.

67. A number of delegations stressed the importance of the Office of the President of the General Assembly and felt that the Office should be further strengthened. Other delegations felt that the Office of the President might be more appropriately reflected under section 1, Overall policy-making, direction and coordination.

68. In respect of the provisions for servicing of the working groups of the General Assembly, one delegation felt that some of the activities had terminated or would be completed; hence, references to such working groups should not have been included in the programme narrative.

69. Several delegations expressed support for subprogramme 3, Electoral assistance. Those delegations attached great importance to the subprogramme and appreciated the work of the Department in that regard. Other delegations indicated that the activities of the subprogramme should be in compliance with the mandates given by the General Assembly and be related to requests from Member States for assistance in the electoral process. Other delegations questioned the nature of the participation of the Centre for Human Rights in electoral assistance activities and its related mandate.

70. One delegation proposed that, in the penultimate sentence of paragraph 2.67, the words "in accordance with legislative mandates" should be

inserted after the word "operations". The same delegation made a similar proposal in connection with paragraph 2.68 (b) (ii) d.

71. Several delegations expressed support for the activities under subprogramme 6, Decolonization, and were concerned about the reductions proposed. Many delegations reaffirmed their full support of the programme of work of the Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The same delegations considered that the regional seminars of the Special Committee continued to be an important and effective instrument for the discharge of the mandate of the Special Committee. Other delegations did not share that view. Some delegations questioned the resources proposed under the subprogramme, in particular the increase in travel resources for the Special Committee. Other delegations believed that visiting missions of the Special Committee constituted an important activity of the Special Committee. Another delegation questioned the inclusion of resources under intergovernmental bodies whose mandates had already finished. Some delegations felt that the subprogramme should be further strengthened until the mandate of the Special Committee had been fulfilled. In connection with intergovernmental bodies whose mandates had already finished, the representative of the Secretary-General indicated that, since the establishment of those intergovernmental bodies, the mandates had historically been renewed by the General Assembly. Adequate provisions were therefore made for the purpose in each biennium.

72. Many delegations expressed support for subprogramme 7, Question of Palestine, until a final settlement of the Palestinian question was reached, and supported the full implementation of the activities proposed. One delegation questioned the resources under the subprogramme and indicated that, under present circumstances, resources could be earmarked for other activities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip such as the United Nations Coordinator for the Occupied Territories, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) or UNDP.

73. A number of delegations expressed support for the overall activities envisaged for programme 26, Disarmament, of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001. Some delegations expressed support for the Conference on Disarmament and indicated that it was the only forum for negotiating treaties. Other delegations queried references to the servicing of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament since the Assembly had reached no agreement on convening such a session. Another delegation questioned the increase in consultant requirements proposed. Other delegations drew attention to the seemingly growing trend towards reduction in resources provided for fellowships for disarmament and could not support such reduction. One delegation did not support the elimination of the three P-5 posts allocated to the three regional centres, but instead considered that those posts should be maintained and used to reinforce the Centre for Disarmament Affairs. Other delegations welcomed the reductions proposed under the programme. Some delegations queried references to the servicing of various treaty bodies under paragraph 2.128 (a) since costs for such bodies were borne by the States parties. Another delegation sought clarification on the use of the phrase "confidence-building measures". Other delegations noted the omission of reference in the narrative to chemical weapons. Many delegations regretted that the narrative did not reflect appropriately the lack of sufficient progress, particularly in the nuclear weapons field. Many delegations expressed concern regarding the insufficiency of resources proposed for servicing the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, and expressed concern about the adverse effect that inadequate resources would have in

responding to conflicts. One delegation reiterated that activities relating to the registration of small arms did not constitute a priority and that concentration should continue to be on weapons of mass destruction. Many delegations expressed concern at the decline of resources regarding the disarmament fellowship programme and requested that the situation be adjusted in order to continue to assist diplomats from developing countries in that important field.

Conclusions and recommendations

74. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 2, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, with the following modifications:

(a) The Spanish version of the narrative of paragraph 2.14 should be revised to read fifty-third and fifty-fourth sessions instead of forty-third and forty-fourth;

(b) At the request of the Committee, the Secretariat provided the following description, which the Committee recommended be inserted in paragraph 2.50 after the second sentence:

"The functions of the proposed liaison office at Addis Ababa would be:

"(a) To facilitate the exchange of information and the coordination of initiatives and efforts in the areas of preventive diplomacy and peacemaking as well as in the democratization process in Africa:

"(i) To follow closely the deliberations of the OAU Mechanism for the Prevention, Management and Resolution of Conflicts and advise Headquarters of political initiatives of concern to the United Nations discussed by the Mechanism;

"(ii) To liaise with the OAU Division for Conflict Resolution and the Department of Political Affairs at large with a view to enhancing cooperation on specific political issues of priority concern to the United Nations and OAU;

"(iii) To support the activities of joint United Nations/OAU special representatives;

"(b) To coordinate the implementation of the programmes of cooperation between the United Nations system and OAU agreed to at the annual meetings between their secretariats;

"(c) To perform such representational functions as may be required and necessary at relevant OAU meetings in Addis Ababa";

(c) In paragraph 2.120, the second sentence should be revised to read: "Since the end of the cold war, developments have been made in a number of important areas in the field of arms control and disarmament", and in the last sentence, the words "and the need for their further integration into the broader international efforts to enhance peace and security" should be deleted;

(d) In paragraph 2.124, at the end of the sixth sentence, the words "in the field of arms control and disarmament" should be added.

Section 3. Peacekeeping operations and special missions

75. At its 11th and 12th meetings, on 17 and 18 June 1997, the Committee considered section 3, Peacekeeping operations and special missions, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

76. Delegations reaffirmed that the maintenance of international peace and security was one of the highest priorities of the Organization, as stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations and the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001. Those delegations supported the activities of peacekeeping operations and special missions since they help to achieve the maintenance of peace. Some delegations reaffirmed that preventive diplomacy should be pursued before peacekeeping operations were launched and that coordination between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other relevant departments in the conduct of peacekeeping operations was critical and should be of prime importance. Other delegations stressed that activities related to peacekeeping operations should not be at the expense of developmental activities of the Organization.

77. Some delegations welcomed the details in the presentation of activities and resource requirements in the section and indicated that the complexity of the activities was reflected in the fascicle. Many delegations felt that the proposals under the Department of Peacekeeping Operations did not reflect the total resources required by the Department. The same delegations felt that the resources requested for the Department were insufficient and that it could not rely on continued provisions outside the regular budget. Other delegations pointed to the imbalance of staff funded from the regular budget, the support account for peacekeeping operations and those provided by Governments on a non-reimbursable basis. Some delegations stressed that the Department should have sufficient means to carry out its tasks and noted with regret the proposed decrease in regular budget posts related to the United Nations Supply Depot at Pisa. Some delegations sought clarification regarding the modalities for financing the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi and for the transfer of the activities of the Depot at Pisa to the Brindisi Base. Some delegations felt that the decrease in posts was inconsistent with the importance attached to the maintenance of peace and security. One delegation noted with gratitude that the Department would work with field missions, while a few delegations stressed the importance of the activities of the Lessons Learned Unit.

78. Some delegations expressed concern at the continuing financial crisis, which, inter alia, had affected reimbursements to countries providing troops and contingent-owned equipment. In that context, the same delegations felt that effective planning, appropriate budgeting and administrative arrangements for peacekeeping operations were necessary. Some delegations emphasized the need for the expeditious settlement of death and disability benefits.

79. In connection with the resources requested for consultancy services required to undertake a study to draw lessons from disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed forces programmes carried out by past and ongoing peacekeeping missions, one delegation expressed the view that efforts should be made to use expertise already available within the Organization, in particular in the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research or in the context of the analysis of the results of disarmament programmes, the activities of which

are reflected under section 2, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

80. With regard to gratis personnel, a number of delegations felt that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should be able to carry out its programme of work without the need to resort to gratis personnel. Some delegations expressed concern at the preponderance of gratis personnel in the Department, on the one hand, and, on the other, the unwillingness of some Member States to provide resources to carry out the activities of the programme in accordance with the provisions of the Charter and to recruit staff in accordance with the Staff Regulations and Rules. The same delegations felt that the provision of gratis personnel would jeopardize execution of the mandated activities. Furthermore, the arrangement was ad hoc and consequently unpredictable and unreliable. Those delegations stressed that the Secretary-General should have included in his post requirements for the Department all the posts he deems necessary to carry out the functions needed for the implementation of its programme of work and yet currently conducted by gratis personnel. They requested that the results of the internal review of the resources required for the Department conducted by the Secretariat and described to the Committee be presented to Member States for their consideration. Other delegations expressed appreciation for the valuable contribution made by gratis personnel to the work of the Organization.

81. Many delegations reiterated that the situation should not by any means be interpreted as a standard practice that would absolve Member States from meeting their responsibilities under the Charter or from reaffirming the principle that Member States collectively should provide all resources necessary for the implementation of mandated programmes and activities by staff recruited in accordance with the Staff Regulations and Rules pursuant to Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter.

82. Some delegations noted with concern the post reductions proposed for the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) and peacekeeping operations in general and felt that those reductions might have a negative impact on the work programme of those peacekeeping missions. Some delegations queried the need for so many civilian support staff when the majority of the UNTSO observers were attached to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). One delegation expressed concern at the reinforcement of other peacekeeping operations by creating new posts without specifying the legislative mandate for doing so. Another delegation supported the proposal as regards the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP). Some delegations recalled the expressed wish of the General Assembly for the streamlining of UNTSO after consultation with the parties concerned.

83. Some delegations regretted that the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 did not provide for resources for special missions related to good offices and preventive diplomacy. Those delegations felt that the Secretary-General should have included financial provision in the proposed programme budget for unforeseen ad hoc missions, at a level commensurate with the requirements for such missions in the recent past. The absence of those resources did not create a potential for the Organization to respond and to react in areas of potential conflict. The same delegations were of the view that special missions were integral in achieving the aim of the Organization in promoting peace and security and that the decrease proposed would affect the capability of the Organization to promote peace and security. One delegation suggested that an operational reserve should be set aside for those activities.

84. A number of delegations expressed concern that provisions for the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) did not cover the entire biennium 1998-1999. Those delegations recalled the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in that connection and fully agreed with the expectation of the Advisory Committee that the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 would include provisions for the financing of the Mission for a full biennium, bearing in mind that the Mission was likely to continue until the year 2000. The same delegations felt that when resources would be required, adequate resources might not be made available to the Mission in a timely manner. Another delegation felt that sufficient mandate existed for the Secretary-General to request resources related to the activities of MINUGUA beyond the end of its current mandate.

Conclusions and recommendations

85. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 3, Peacekeeping operations and special missions, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 3.10 should read:

"The Department must maintain a capacity to discharge effectively those tasks assigned to it, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and taking into account the important contribution that regional arrangements and agencies, within their respective mandates, scope and composition, can make to peacekeeping, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter";

(b) As to paragraph 3.19, the Committee recommended that the Secretariat first utilize existing studies, especially those published by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, before requesting new studies to be conducted within the United Nations system, and use specialized consultancy services, if necessary, as a last resort;

(c) In paragraph 3.19 (b), the words "reintegration of armed forces" should be deleted.

86. The Committee also recommended ensuring congruity among mandates, resources and objectives in implementing peacekeeping mandates. The peacekeeping function should be effectively and efficiently managed throughout the United Nations by appropriate measures, including accountability and responsibility.

87. In connection with MINUGUA, bearing in mind that the Agreement on the Implementation, Compliance and Verification Timetable for the Peace Agreement was a detailed guide for the implementation from 1997 to the end of 2000, and that the Mission would be likely to continue until the end of 2000, the Committee noted that, in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, resources for the full biennium 1998-1999 for the financing of the Mission were not included under the section.

88. The Committee noted that the issue of gratis personnel was under active consideration by the General Assembly and drew the attention of the Assembly to

the need to review staffing issues for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in their entirety.

Section 4. Peaceful uses of outer space

89. At its 23rd meeting, on 26 June 1997, the Committee considered section 4, Peaceful uses of outer space, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

90. Delegations expressed support for and attached great importance to the programme of activities of the section. Many delegations appreciated the concrete results achieved by the Office for Outer Space Affairs and its efficient use of resources. Several delegations stressed the important role of the activities in reducing the gap between the rich and the poor, and the technology gap between developed and developing countries. Those delegations indicated, therefore, that the political, legal, scientific and technical assistance components of the activities benefited all countries. Another delegation stressed the importance and risks involved in the use of outer space and indicated that a recent incident in that connection pointed to the need for the active participation of Member States in the peaceful uses of outer space programme.

91. Some delegations, while supporting the programme of work of the Office, queried the resources proposed. Those delegations felt that no substantial increase should be proposed under the section, while other delegations expressed support for the resources proposed under the section. Some delegations observed that the resources proposed for 1998-1999 were at approximately the same level as the initial appropriations for 1996-1997 and at the level of expenditure during 1994-1995. Accordingly, the Office had instituted measures to enhance efficiency further so as to ensure the effective implementation of its work programme.

Conclusions and recommendations

92. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 4, Peaceful uses of outer space, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Section 6. Legal affairs

93. At its 26th meeting, on 30 June 1997, the Committee considered section 6, Legal affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

94. Delegations expressed firm support for and reaffirmed the importance of the activities of the section. Some delegations also welcomed the streamlining of the Treaty Section through technological enhancement, which would improve the timeliness of publication of treaties.

95. In connection with subprogramme 4, Law of the sea and ocean affairs, several delegations, while taking note of the establishment of two new treaty organs, namely, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and the International Seabed Authority, were greatly concerned about the considerable reductions in both human and financial resources proposed under the subprogramme. They felt that the subprogramme remained vital, taking into account, in particular, the increasing need of assistance to States on the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and requested confirmation from the representative of the Secretary-General that the reduced resources proposed would be sufficient for the Secretariat to carry out the work programme during the biennium 1998-1999 as mandated by the General Assembly. Another delegation pointed to the imbalance in resources proposed under the subprogramme compared with other activities undertaken by the Office of Legal Affairs, where minimal reductions and increases were proposed. One delegation, while appreciating the redeployment of resources to other areas in view of changing structure, expressed the view that further reductions might be possible under the subprogramme. The Committee was informed that the establishment of the two new treaty organs mentioned above had resulted in a significant reduction of work under the subprogramme and that changes reflecting current needs were proposed following careful and thorough consideration of the mandates determined by the General Assembly. The Committee was assured that the Secretariat would be able to implement those mandates within the resources proposed.

96. One delegation referred to paragraph 4.18 of subprogramme 4.3, Progressive development and codification of international law, of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, which set out a number of measures that the Codification Division must undertake in order to implement the activities requested by the General Assembly in its resolutions 49/60 of 9 December 1994 and 50/53 of 11 December 1995 on the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism. That delegation noted that there was no reference in paragraph 6.57 to activities related to measures to eliminate terrorism. In that connection, the delegation suggested adding the following sentence at the end of paragraph 6.57 of the programme narrative:

> "In connection with the first objective, the Division has responsibility for undertaking further work to implement General Assembly resolutions 49/60 and 50/53 on the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism and thus to follow up closely the implementation of paragraph 10 of the Declaration and to submit annual reports thereon."

97. One delegation noted with concern the increase in resources for programme support, which was not in line with the expressed wish of Member States to reduce resources under that component in the proposed programme budget. Another delegation questioned the number of meetings proposed for the States parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and felt that it could be reduced. One delegation sought clarification on the extent of activities in which the Office of Legal Affairs was involved in various areas such as procurement, the implementation of the new Code of Conduct, as outlined in paragraph 6.45 (a), and the legal advice provided regarding the administration of the International Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda mentioned in paragraph 6.33.

98. Under subprogramme 1, one delegation noted the reclassification of the post of Deputy to the Legal Counsel to D-2 and the change of funding of the post from extrabudgetary resources to regular budget, and indicated that all mandated activities should be funded from the regular budget. The Committee was informed

that the Office provided services to peacekeeping operations and other programmes of the Organization, such as UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which were funded from voluntary contributions, and that it was appropriate for those extrabudgetary programmes to reimburse the Organization for services it provided. Another delegation queried the increase in the resources for travel under the same subprogramme. Another delegation noted the impact of the budget reductions during the biennium 1996-1997 on the implementation of mandated programmes under section 6 and expressed concern that, in view of the level of resources proposed for 1998-1999, the Office might continue to operate at the same low level as in the biennium 1996-1997. Another delegation, while appreciating the work of the Office and the quality and dedication of its staff, expressed the hope that, in the light of recent developments, the plan would be adjusted to reflect the completion of the convention on the non-navigational uses of international watercourses mentioned in paragraph 6.64 (b) (i).

99. One delegation underlined the importance of legal publications and requested clarification of the omission of any reference in paragraph 6.5 to the work undertaken by the Codification Division to update and publish the summaries of judgments, advisory opinions and orders of the International Court of Justice.

100. As regards the activities related to the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law, one delegation emphasized the importance of seminars, practical courses and fellowships. That delegation suggested an increase in resources for those activities. The same delegation questioned, in particular, the absence of provision in paragraph 6.71 of travel subsidies for those purposes. Such provisions had been included in the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

Conclusions and recommendations

101. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 6, Legal affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to the following modification: in paragraph 6.58, after the word "Awards", the words "the update of summaries of judgments, advisory opinions and orders of the International Court of Justice" should be inserted.

Section 7. Policy coordination and sustainable development

102. At its 12th and 13th meetings, on 18 June 1997, the Committee considered section 7, Policy coordination and sustainable development, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

103. Most delegations reaffirmed the special importance they attached to the United Nations activities in the economic and sustainable development areas. Several delegations referred to the Secretary-General's plans to restructure the work of the Organization in the economic and social areas and sought clarification regarding the impact it might have on the programme of work, the relevant departments and entities and the resources to carry out the mandated

activities. Many delegations stressed the need to allocate an adequate level of resources to those areas of the work of the Organization.

104. Several delegations expressed their satisfaction at the scope of activities and commended the information provided under the proposed programme of work described in section 7. A number of delegations noted that a balanced distribution of resources among the subprogrammes was provided.

105. Many delegations reiterated their strong support for the programme of work under subprogramme 2, Advancement of women, and welcomed the proposed additional resources related to the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Equality of Women. One delegation considered that incremental resources should be further justified. Some delegations requested clarification regarding the modalities of work and reporting between the Chief of the Department and the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Equality of Women.

106. Some delegations felt that aspects of the programme of work such as the coordination capacity in the economic and social areas, the follow-up to the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the non-governmental organizations were particularly important.

107. Some delegations emphasized the importance of the intergovernmental machinery serviced by the Department, and stressed in particular the need to provide full support for the servicing of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

108. One delegation suggested that at every session of the General Assembly the main debate should focus on a specially selected theme of high and long-term interest to Member States, with a view to adopting appropriate strategies and plans of action.

109. One delegation expressed concern about the content of the third sentence of paragraph 7.38. That delegation considered that the policy report of the Secretary-General should be prepared primarily on the basis of consultations with Member States. That delegation also considered that the other participants described in the above-mentioned paragraph could make some contribution.

110. One delegation proposed that the last sentence of paragraph 7.38 be deleted.

111. Another delegation proposed that, in the Spanish version:

(a) In paragraph 7.41 (a) (i) a. i., in the ninth line, the words "mentalidad y desarrollo" be replaced by the words "cultura y desarrollo";

(b) In paragraph 7.72, in the sixth line, the word "ecológicos" be replaced by "ambientales".

112. One delegation proposed that in paragraph 7.73, in the last sentence, the words "non-State actors" be deleted.

Conclusions and recommendations

113. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 7, Policy coordination and sustainable development, of the

proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction.

Section 8. Africa: New Agenda for Development

114. At its 13th meeting, on 18 June 1997, the Committee considered section 8, Africa: New Agenda for Development, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

115. Several delegations stressed the priority attached to programme 6, Africa: New Agenda for Development, in the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 and expressed their support for the activities proposed under section 8. They expressed the view that the proposed resources under section 8 did not adequately address the needs of Africa and should be strengthened. Some delegations considered that the allocation of resources between subprogrammes did not fully reflect the present priorities within programme 6 and that increased resources should be allocated to subprogramme 2.

116. Several delegations emphasized the special role of the United Nations Special Initiative on Africa in galvanizing United Nations system efforts for the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. In that context, they were of the view that the activities proposed in the section, in particular those under subprogramme 1, did not adequately reflect the need for coordination with other programmes and initiatives on African development. Others emphasized the role of the Special Coordinator for Africa and Least Developed Countries in the coordination of system-wide activities concerning Africa, as well as in global advocacy and mobilization of support for the development of Africa. Many delegations stressed the urgent need for better coordination at all levels between the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and the new Special Initiative.

117. Some delegations were concerned about the possible overlap and duplication both between the activities proposed under subprogrammes 1 and 2 and with the activities of other institutions and programmes in Africa, in particular those operating within the framework of the System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development and the United Nations Special Initiative on Africa.

118. Some delegations were of the view that in the forthcoming restructuring of the Secretariat, the activities under section 8 and the organizational units responsible for their implementation should continue to retain their distinct identity, in order to ensure full and timely implementation of programme 6. Other delegations expressed the view that those organizational units should be merged with other relevant organizational units of the Secretariat or consolidated under the umbrella of a high-level official of the Secretariat to be responsible for the implementation of all action programmes on African development.

119. Some delegations emphasized that the office responsible, namely, the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, relied in the same manner as section 8 of the programme budget, on the mandate duly adopted by the General Assembly and, as a result, was part of the areas that the

Secretary-General, according to sections B and F of his letter of 17 March 1997 (A/51/829), could not change without consultation with and prior approval of Member States. In that connection, they noted that, in reaffirming the priority given to the economic recovery of Africa, the Secretary-General recently stressed before the Thirty-third Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, that the continent should be one of the main beneficiaries of the reform measures he was planning to submit to Member States.

120. Some delegations expressed their support for the activities of the Department of Public Information proposed under subprogramme 3. Other delegations expressed the view that the activities under subprogramme 3 should place more emphasis on highlighting national efforts in promoting African economic development. Yet others suggested that resources might be redistributed among the subprogrammes.

Conclusions and recommendations

121. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 8, Africa: New Agenda for Development, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction.

122. The Committee also recommended that the element of South-South cooperation of the narrative of subprogramme 1 be fully implemented and reinforced.

Section 9. Economic and social information and policy analysis

123. At its 24th meeting, on 27 June 1997, the Committee considered section 9, Economic and social information and policy analysis, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

124. Several delegations expressed their support for the programme and acknowledged the positive impact of the work of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, especially in the areas of statistics and population, and the value of its publications, in particular to developing countries. Other delegations considered that some other areas of the programme of work of the Department overlapped the work of other organizations and offices inside and outside the United Nations system and were of the view that the ongoing restructuring should address that problem.

125. Some delegations considered that the level of resources was not adequate to fully implement the programme of work contained in the section. They were also concerned about the number of posts proposed for abolition or remaining vacant and the impact of this on the implementation of the programme of work. One delegation stated that, in view of the ongoing restructuring of the United Nations, an increase in resources was not warranted. Some delegations expressed the hope that the proposed restructuring of the economic departments would not be detrimental to the quality of the work to be carried out.

126. One delegation emphasized the need to expand the focus of the subprogramme on population. Another suggested that case studies on positive and negative experiences with market reforms should be undertaken.

127. One delegation proposed a revision of the first sentence of paragraph 9.47 to read:

> "One major consequence of globalization and liberalization is that Governments can no longer manage their national economies without an understanding of developments in the world economy. Such developments should be taken into account by Governments in accordance with their national priorities."

Conclusions and recommendations

128. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 9, Economic and social information and policy analysis, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction.

Section 10. Development support and management services

129. At its 24th meeting, on 27 June 1997, the Committee considered section 10, Development support and management services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

130. Several delegations expressed their support for the activities of the Department for Development Support and Management Services and emphasized the importance they attached in particular to technical cooperation activities. Others stressed the importance of the assistance provided by the Department to the countries with economies in transition, in particular in the areas of technology and market development, development of enterprise, international cooperation in tax matters and public administration, and considered that the capacity to provide such assistance should not be reduced as a result of the ongoing restructuring of the Department.

131. A number of delegations expressed full agreement with the section, including the proposed reductions of resources. Many other delegations expressed concern at the proposed reductions of resources and the negative impact that might have on the full implementation of the programme of work.

132. Some delegations reiterated their long-standing concern regarding the possible duplication of activities between the Department and the United Nations Development Programme, and expressed the view that the ongoing restructuring should bring a solution to the problem.

133. One delegation requested clarification on the work of the Committee on Natural Resources; another stated that the Committee had limited usefulness and that the issues on its agenda could be dealt with by other bodies and the resources reduced accordingly.

134. One delegation proposed that:

(a) In paragraph 10.29, the last sentence be redrafted in line with paragraph 8.7 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, as follows: "The subprogramme also aims at cooperating, at the request of interested

Governments, and according to their priorities, in the definition of needs of reconstruction once a conflict is over";

(b) In paragraph 10.30, the words "at their request and according to their priorities" be inserted after the word "implement";

(c) In paragraph 10.31, the last sentence be redrafted in accordance with paragraph 8.1 of programme 8 of the medium-term plan, which stressed that the general purpose of the programme was to support the efforts of the developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, as well as countries with economies in transition.

Conclusions and recommendations

135. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 10, Development support and management services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction.

Section 11A. Trade and development

136. At its 21st meeting, on 25 June 1997, the Committee considered section 11A, Trade and development, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

137. Many delegations reaffirmed the importance they attached to the role of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) as the focal point within the United Nations for the integrated treatment of development and interrelated issues in the areas of trade, finance, technology, investment and sustainable development and reiterated their full support to the UNCTAD programme.

138. Many delegations expressed appreciation for the valuable contribution of UNCTAD in assisting developing countries in the process of globalization and their integration into the world economy.

139. Many delegations welcomed the efforts to streamline the structure of the UNCTAD secretariat and to refocus its programme of work in line with the outcome of the ninth session of the Conference. Many delegations expressed the view that the reform and restructuring of UNCTAD had been completed, with the decisions taken during the ninth session, held at Midrand in April 1996, and did not need any further streamlining. Those delegations were of the opinion that UNCTAD now needed to consolidate the implementation of its reformed structure with the full support of Member States and should devote itself exclusively to the full implementation of its mandated activities. Some delegations expressed the view that the reform of UNCTAD was an ongoing process and looked forward to further streamlining of the organization. Several delegations expressed concern at the impact that the streamlining would have on its capacity to implement the programme of work. One delegation conveyed the belief that the reform efforts of UNCTAD would allow it to carry out its priority activities more effectively.

140. Some delegations considered that there should be a better balance between the resources proposed under the regular budget and the estimated extrabudgetary resources and expressed concern at the increasing reliance on extrabudgetary resources. Other delegations considered the current balance to be appropriate.

141. Many delegations were of the view that the proposed reductions in resources were too large and considered that this would jeopardize the execution of the work programme. Other delegations considered that the proposed level of resources was the minimum required to implement the programme of work. Some delegations welcomed the reduction in resources and felt that further reductions should be made, in particular for posts in the General Service category.

142. Several delegations emphasized the importance they attached to the activities under subprogramme 5, Least developed, landlocked and island developing countries. Some delegations were of the view that the programme of work should have better reflected references to small island developing States, in accordance with programme 9 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, and emphasized the need to provide adequate resources for activities related to those States. Some other delegations expressed their continuing concern about the work of the subprogramme, to which they had agreed only reluctantly in the context of the discussion on the medium-term plan. They argued that the decision taken at the ninth session of UNCTAD to treat work on least developed, landlocked and island developing States as cross-cutting issues obviated the need for a separate subprogramme. Those delegations stressed that the Office of the Special Coordinator for Least Developed, Landlocked and Island Developing Countries should focus solely on coordination and should not stray into programme activities. Many delegations pointed out that subprogramme 5 flowed directly from the consensus of the Member States reached under programme 9 of the medium-term plan. Those delegations, however, questioned the further depletion of resources for the subprogramme beyond the reductions made following the ninth session. They also referred to paragraph 13 of General Assembly resolution 50/103 of 20 December 1995 on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, in which the Assembly recalled that at the end of the decade, a global review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action would be carried out, and called for effective implementation of activities under section 11A concerning that global review.

143. Many delegations expressed their strong support for the proposal to rechannel $1.4 million in savings to finance the participation of experts from developing countries in expert meetings of the commissions of UNCTAD and noted that even with that inclusion, the UNCTAD budget would show significant negative growth. Some delegations expressed opposition to that proposal. Many delegations regretted that the proposal had been rejected, while others maintained their opposition to the proposal.

144. Many delegations stated that the UNCTAD Special Economic Unit for Assistance to the Palestinian People should continue its work undiminished.

Conclusions and recommendations

145. The Committee took note of the document entitled "Agreed conclusions and Chairman's summary" forwarded by the Chairman of the twenty-ninth session of the Working Party of the Trade and Development Board on the UNCTAD Budget and Medium-Term Plan.

146. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 11A, Trade and development, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, with the following modifications:

(a) In the second sentence of paragraph 11A.46, the words "such as landlocked and small island developing countries" should be inserted after "certain developing countries";

(b) In paragraph 11A.60, the following subparagraph (d) should be added:

"(d) The capacity of island developing countries to alleviate special development constraints relating to the high transport costs will have been improved."

Section 11B. International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO

147. At its 22nd meeting, on 25 June 1997, the Committee considered section 11B, International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

148. Several delegations expressed their support for the activities of the International Trade Centre.

149. Some delegations recalled the mandate established for the Centre by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/219 in the context of its approval of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 and stressed the need to uphold the role of the General Assembly in the review and approval of the programme of work and budget of the Centre.

Conclusions and recommendations

150. The Committee noted with concern that, owing to the request of the World Trade Organization to revise the arrangements governing the programme budget of the International Trade Centre since 1974, the programme of work of the Centre for the biennium 1998-1999 was not available for review by the Committee. As a result, the Committee was not in a position to make recommendations to the General Assembly on section 11B, International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO.

151. The Committee took note of the statement of the representative of the Secretariat that a revised section 11B, International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO, containing a complete description of the programme of work derived from the relevant subprogrammes of programme 9, Trade and development, of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 and detailed information on resources, would be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session for review and approval.

Section 12. Environment

152. At its 15th meeting, on 19 June 1997, the Committee considered section 12, Environment, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

153. A number of delegations expressed their support for the programme and the role of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as the focal point for environmental action and coordination within the United Nations system. Several delegations were concerned that the decision of the Governing Council to reduce the resources available to UNEP for 1998-1999 would have a negative impact on the programme of activities. Some delegations considered that the programme of work might need to be further revised in the light of the outcome of the special session of the General Assembly on the implementation of Agenda 21. Some delegations considered that UNEP should prepare itself adequately for a positive political dialogue with Member States during the special session of the General Assembly.

154. Some delegations referred to the recommendations contained in the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/51/810), and sought clarification as to the status of implementation of those recommendations and as to how they had been taken into account in the preparation of the proposed programme budget. Some delegations indicated that the Programme's current difficulties made it necessary for full effect to be given to the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. The representative of UNEP indicated that internal arrangements had been made in Nairobi to ensure that the recommendations were fully implemented and that a report on the status of their implementation would be submitted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services to the Committee at its thirty-eighth session in the context of the report on the triennial review of the implementation of the Committee's recommendations on the in-depth evaluation of the programme on environment.

155. Some delegations stressed the importance of rational use of resources and the need to put in place a coherent structure that would lend itself to greater coordination, harmonization and collaboration with other United Nations agencies and organizations.

156. A number of delegations observed that the amounts of extrabudgetary resources under consultants and experts, supplies and materials and furniture and equipment budget lines seemed too high. The representative of UNEP informed the Committee that the projected expenditures for 1998-1999 under those objects were based on anticipated contributions of $75 million, as approved by the Governing Council at its nineteenth session, while the amounts indicated under the same objects for 1996-1997 were based on reduced actual contributions amounting to $62.5 million.

157. Some delegations welcomed the reductions under policy-making organs, and noted that further reductions, particularly under temporary assistance for meetings, could have been made in the light of the establishment of the United Nations Office at Nairobi.

158. Some delegations considered that the wording of paragraph 12.5, which outlines the UNEP mission for the biennium, did not reflect adequately the narrative of paragraph 10.4 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001. They were of the view that reference to non-governmental organizations should be worded in accordance with a standardized terminology. One delegation suggested that, in paragraph 12.5, the words "with partners within and outside the United Nations" should be replaced by the words "within the United Nations system".

Conclusions and recommendations

159. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 12, Environment, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 with the following modification: in paragraph 12.19, the words "organized groups of individuals at all levels" should be replaced by the words "non-governmental organizations".

Section 13. Human settlements

160. At its 15th meeting, on 19 June 1997, the Committee considered section 13, Human settlements, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

161. A number of delegations expressed support to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) as the coordinator of the activities of the United Nations in the field of human settlements and its role as a source of technical assistance to Member States.

162. Several delegations welcomed the commitment of the Centre to implement fully the recommendations contained in the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/51/884).

163. Some delegations noted that the programme of work was to be revised in the light of the reduced level of extrabudgetary resources approved by the Commission on Human Settlements at its sixteenth session. Some delegations considered that priorities should be set within each subprogramme.

164. Several delegations observed that the streamlined new subprogramme structure would enable the Centre to focus on fewer programme areas leading to better delivery capacity. Some delegations expressed their appreciation for the inclusion of a self-evaluation mechanism at the subprogramme level.

165. A number of delegations expressed concern that executive direction and management was top-heavy and that the resources allocated to it seemed too high. Some delegations were of the view that the proposed staffing table under extrabudgetary resources should be reviewed downward. Other delegations sought explanation as to what constituted "other" extrabudgetary expenditures ($45 million) under table 13.2 of the fascicle. They were informed that that referred to operational projects, carried out through funding from UNDP ($36 million), and other sources ($9 million), as reflected in table 13.1 under extrabudgetary resources.

166. Some delegations underlined the need for a clearer information dissemination strategy, both in print and in electronic format, including the possibility of regrouping under subprogramme 4, Assessment, monitoring and information, all information dissemination activities carried out by the Centre.

167. A number of delegations noted that the programme narrative of the section made no reference either to the countries with economies in transition or to setting up pilot projects to stimulate development in those countries.

168. Some delegations emphasized the importance of cooperation and coordination with other United Nations bodies and organizations, particularly the Commission on Sustainable Development and UNDP.

169. Some delegations noted that the reference to "partners and civil society" in the last sentence of paragraph 13.22 should have been worded in accordance with the terminology used in existing mandates. Some delegations were of the view that the reference to "the realization of the human right to adequate housing" in the same sentence did not fully reflect the agreement reached during the sixteenth session of the Commission and proposed that the word "progressive" be inserted before the word "realization".

Conclusions and recommendations

170. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 13, Human settlements, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to the following modifications:

(a) In paragraph 13.4, in the Spanish version, the word "ecológicos" should be replaced with the word "ambientales" and the word "vigilar" with the word "supervisar";

(b) In paragraph 13.22, the word "partners" should be replaced with the words "local authorities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector".

Section 14. Crime control

171. At its 16th meeting, on 20 June 1997, the Committee considered section 14, Crime control, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

172. Many delegations expressed their support for the programme and felt that the share of resources provided for it in the biennium 1998-1999 did not reflect its importance and the priority given to it by the General Assembly in the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001.

173. Many delegations expressed their concern that the resources, both within the regular budget and extrabudgetary, were insufficient in particular in the areas of transnational crime and technical assistance to developing countries. Many delegations noted the need for increased assistance to countries or regions that were particularly affected by serious crime, including the consequences of drug trafficking.

174. Several delegations noted with great concern that the programme of work did not include activities related to combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations although that issue had been considered as a priority in the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001. Some delegations stressed the importance of maintaining close cooperation with other institutions and agencies and in particular with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme not only in connection with control of money laundering and the proceeds of crime, but also in the areas of transnational crime, drug trafficking and international terrorism. Some delegations referred to the importance of

maintaining the principle of equitable geographical representation in the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division.

175. Some delegations proposed including the following text under conclusions and recommendations: "The Committee requested that the programme of work of this section during the biennium 1998-1999 include some activities that could strengthen international cooperation and improve the response of Member States to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations".

176. Some delegations proposed the following modifications to the text of section 14:

(a) Paragraph 14.2 (b) (ii) should be revised to read:

"Support the strengthening of the capacity of Governments, at their request, to improve their legislation and criminal justice system";

(b) In paragraph 14.2 (c) (ii), the words "transnational crime in all its forms" should be replaced with the words "transnational crime, particularly in its most serious forms";

(c) In paragraph 14.2 (c) (iii), after the word "terrorism", the words "in all its forms and manifestations" should be added;

(d) Paragraph 14.2 (c) (iii), should be replaced with paragraph 12.3 (c) of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001.

Conclusions and recommendations

177. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 14, Crime control, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 14.2 (b) (ii) should be revised to read:

"Support the strengthening of the capacity of Governments, at their request, to improve their legislation and criminal justice system";

(b) Paragraph 14.2 (c) (iii) should be revised to read:

"Elaborating and assisting Member States in the implementation of effective strategies and practical arrangements for consistent and efficient cooperation against major forms of criminality, such as organized transnational crime, including drug trafficking, corruption, terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, smuggling of illegal migrants, trafficking in women and children, environmental offences, the laundering of the proceeds of crime, fraudulent operations and other forms of economic crime."

178. The Committee also recommended that the programme of work of the section during the biennium 1998-1999 include some activities that could strengthen international cooperation and improve the response of Member States in combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as well as other forms of transnational crime, in accordance with paragraph 12.3 (c) of the medium-term plan, and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

Section 15. International drug control

179. At its 16th meeting, on 20 June 1997, the Committee considered section 15, International drug control, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

180. Many delegations expressed their support for the programme and noted the priority attached to it in the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001.

181. Many delegations stressed the importance of the role of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme in providing leadership to agencies in the United Nations system for the further development of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control, the role of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and its regional subsidiary bodies, and that of the International Narcotics Control Board. A number of delegations considered that the activities of the International Narcotics Control Board and of the meetings of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies should be strengthened.

182. Some delegations emphasized the transnational nature of the drug control problem. Several delegations also emphasized the importance of coordination with the crime control programme, in particular as regards money laundering.

183. A number of delegations expressed concern that the budget proposals contained no reference to the problems of transit countries; others noted the absence of reference to consumers and the absence of activities related to the issue of demand reduction. The Secretariat indicated that activities related to demand reduction and to the problems of transit States were included under subprogramme 3, Prevention and reduction of drug abuse, elimination of illicit crops and suppression of illicit drug trafficking. Activities related to illicit drug trafficking were intended to cover trafficking from the point of origin of drugs to the point of consumption. Examples of activities funded by the Fund for the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to assist transit States were provided, including in particular the establishment of field offices in the Caribbean and Central Asian regions. It was reiterated that the Programme would continue to implement activities to assist transit States. One delegation referred to supplies by some industrialized countries of technologies and reagents (reactives) used by drug producers. Another delegation stressed the importance of activities related to alternative development.

184. Some delegations expressed strong support for the special session of the General Assembly on international drug control, to be held in 1998, and expressed concern at the lack of importance given to the question in the budget section. Some stressed the need to ensure the availability of financial resources for activities in preparation for the special session and for the implementation of the activities to be carried out as a result of the outcome of the special session.

Conclusions and recommendations

185. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 15, International drug control, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction and with the following modifications:

(a) In paragraph 15.8, the words "and help to set the agenda for international drug control for the following decade" should be deleted;

(b) After paragraph 15.8, the following paragraph should be added:

"The Programme will provide services to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, as the preparatory body of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to the combat against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities, to be held in June 1998";

(c) After old paragraph 15.12, the following paragraph should be added:

"Five days at the 1998 session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs will be devoted to the preparation of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to the combat against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities";

(d) In old paragraph 15.18 (a) (i), the words "Prepare for and participate in the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council" should be deleted and the words "on drug control" should be replaced by the words "devoted to the combat against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities";

(e) In old paragraph 15.18 (a) (ii), a new subparagraph should be added to read: "c. Pertinent documents for the preparatory process of the special session of the General Assembly";

(f) After old paragraph 15.18 (c), a new subparagraph (d) should be added to read: "The Programme will compile the recommendations presented to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs by organs, organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations, as well as by multilateral development banks, as the preparatory body of the special session on the issues to be addressed by the special session";

(g) In old paragraph 15.28 (a) (ii) a., the words "documentation for the preparatory process of the special session" should be added;

(h) In old paragraph 15.28 (b) (iii), the words "public relations material to promote the special session of the General Assembly devoted to the combat against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities" should be added;

(i) In old paragraph 15.36, the full name of the special session of the General Assembly should be inserted;

(j) In old paragraph 15.37 (a) (ii), between a. and b., the following should be inserted: "Report of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, as the preparatory body of the special session devoted to the combat against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities, containing the recommendations for the special session";

(k) In old paragraph 15.37 (a) (ii) c., the word "and" before the word "four" should be deleted and the following words should be added at the end of

the paragraph: "and documents on possible results of the special session of the General Assembly, in particular with possible measures to strengthen the implementation of the international drug conventions";

(l) In old paragraph 15.42, the following words should be inserted between the words "will focus" and the words "on the improvement": "in 1998, on the preparation of a draft of a declaration of the United Nations on the principles for the reduction of the demand, which could be approved at the special session of the General Assembly in June 1998. Furthermore, activities will focus".

Section 16. Economic and social development in Africa

186. At its 19th meeting, on 24 June 1997, the Committee considered section 16, Economic and social development in Africa, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

187. Many delegations expressed support for the programme of work in this section, which was one of the priority areas of the Organization. They also welcomed the reform process carried out by the Economic Commission for Africa. A number of delegations encouraged the secretariat of the Commission to continue in its pursuit of professional and managerial excellence.

188. Several delegations expressed satisfaction at the efforts made to refocus the programme of activities on fewer core issues. Some delegations felt that the programme of work did not give adequate treatment to the core issues of trade and finance, industry, transport and communication, and agriculture in their entirety. It was explained that, while those issues did not in themselves constitute separate subprogrammes, they were major areas of focus in the programme of work under various subprogrammes.

189. Some delegations welcomed the proposed reduction of posts under executive direction and management and programme support and the growth reflected under the substantive programme of work. A number of delegations noted that the Commission had become more streamlined. They felt, however, that the resource base was still too low and needed to be increased significantly. They also felt that technological innovation and decentralization through the new subregional development centres and the training of staff should be expanded to further enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Commission.

190. Some delegations encouraged the efforts being made to mobilize more extrabudgetary resources to complement regular budget resources, which were not commensurate with the development needs of the region and the challenges facing the Commission. They referred to resolution 830 (XXXII) of the ECA Conference of Ministers, by which the Secretary-General was requested, and the General Assembly was invited, to allocate sufficient resources to the Commission in order for it to implement its programme of work. To that end, they stressed that the priority accorded to African recovery, which has been reiterated on many occasions by the Secretary-General, should be reflected in the allocation of resources.

191. One delegation was of the view that no resource growth should have been proposed under this section following the outcome of the reform currently under way, and that the contributions to the African Institute for Economic

Development and Planning (IDEP) and the United Nations Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) should be discontinued. Some other delegations stressed that IDEP and UNAFRI were statutorily linked to the Commission and that the contributions supported core and essential functions at those institutions. They were of the view that those functions should be supported under the regular budget.

192. Some delegations reiterated the importance of better coordination at the field level between the Commission and the relevant United Nations specialized agencies operating in Africa, and of full respect for the delineation of their responsibilities.

Conclusions and recommendations

193. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 16, Economic and social development in Africa, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction.

Section 17. Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific

194. At its 19th meeting, on 24 June 1997, the Committee considered section 17, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

195. Several delegations reaffirmed their support for the multifaceted role of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and its commitment to the development of the region and expressed full support for the proposed programme budget. They noted that the budget document was detailed and concise and clearly highlighted the priorities in the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 and the activities to be undertaken.

196. Some delegations expressed concern that the proposed resources were not commensurate with the development needs of the countries of the region. They emphasized that reform should not reduce the Commission's capacity to deliver services but rather be conducive to increased efficiency. Several delegations welcomed the increase in resource growth for substantive activities under the section on the programme of work.

197. One delegation noted with concern the increase in the overall resources requested under the section and considered that resources should decrease as a result of the streamlined structure derived from the reform process.

198. A number of delegations expressed support for the promotion of international cooperation in the region and the reinforcement of inter-agency collaboration through the Regional Inter-Agency Committee for Asia and the Pacific and its subcommittees. Other delegations noted with appreciation the Commission's great contribution to the international community and to the needs of its member countries, in particular its assistance to countries with economies in transition in Central Asia through technical assistance and advisory services in the areas of macroeconomic reform, transport, trade and investment. Satisfaction was also expressed for the inclusion of activities

related to the participation of the private sector in development, the alleviation of poverty, the promotion of science and technology and human resources development. Some delegations stressed the need for the Commission to continue its lead role in infrastructure development to facilitate intraregional trade and the development of transport and communications linkages.

199. A number of delegations emphasized the need to strengthen the Commission's role in operational activities, particularly technical assistance and advisory services, and to pay special attention to the needs of least developed and landlocked countries, island developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

Conclusions and recommendations

200. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 17, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction.

Section 18. Economic development in Europe

201. At its 20th meeting, on 24 June 1997, the Committee considered section 18, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

202. Several delegations expressed their support for the proposed programme of work, which clearly reflected the strategic guidelines of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 and the extensive reforms adopted by the member States of the Economic Commission for Europe. Those delegations welcomed the refocusing of the programme of work on priority areas for the region such as environment, statistics, development of international trade and assistance to economies in transition. Many delegations considered that positive results were anticipated since the streamlining and readjustments of the programme of work, that is, the discontinuation of one subprogramme and of several subsidiary bodies, would bring about greater effectiveness and synergy within the Commission. The diversity of approaches to economic cooperation in Europe, as well as the Commission's role as a facilitator in fostering it, was also welcomed.

203. Some delegations underscored the intensive relationship of the Economic Commission for Europe with existing regional, subregional and other structures, such as the European Union, the Western European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Central European Initiative, the Royaument Initiative for good-neighbourly relations and stability, the South-East Cooperative Initiative and others, with a view to strengthening cooperation on the continent.

204. One delegation noted with concern the increase of the overall resources requested under the section and considered that resources should decrease as a result of the streamlined structure derived from the reform process.

Conclusions and recommendations

205. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 18, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction.

Section 19. Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean

206. At its 22nd meeting, on 25 June 1997, the Committee considered section 19, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

207. Many delegations expressed their support for the programme and acknowledged the positive impact of the work of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in many areas of development and the prestige that it enjoys in the region as a centre of excellence. Some delegations welcomed the quality and quantity of the publications programme and stressed the importance of assuring wide distribution for all publications.

208. Some delegations considered that the level of both regular budget and extrabudgetary resources was not adequate to cover the extensive programme of work contained in the section. They were also concerned about the number of posts proposed for abolition and the negative impact that might have on the capacity of ECLAC to implement its programme of work. Others stressed the need to ensure that sufficient regular budgetary and extrabudgetary resources were allocated to the subregional headquarters of ECLAC, in particular the Caribbean office. One delegation expressed the view that, given the economic and social problems facing the Latin American and Caribbean regions, ECLAC should now place greater emphasis than hitherto on operational activities that addressed the priority concerns of the region. Some delegations emphasized the importance of maintaining appropriate coverage of social equity issues. Others were concerned about the low level of resources available for environmental issues.

209. One delegation noted with concern the increase of the overall resources requested under the section and considered that resources should decrease as a result of the streamlined structure derived from the reform process. Some delegations stressed that further streamlining might hinder, in the long run, the full implementation of the Commission's mandated activities.

210. Some delegations supported the streamlining and restructuring reflected in the work programme. One delegation requested information on the legislative mandate for the inclusion of the last phrase in paragraph 19.4 of the section. Several delegations supported the thrust of the proposed management pilot scheme and noted its potential application to other areas of the Secretariat. Other delegations welcomed the dialogue between ECLAC and member countries in the setting of priorities within the work programme. Other delegations welcomed the recent effort to improve the dialogue between ECLAC and member countries in the setting of priorities within the work programme and expressed the hope that a constant dialogue would be maintained on such a setting of priorities as well as on the implementation of the decisions adopted by ECLAC on 6 June 1997 regarding the management pilot scheme.

211. Some delegations questioned the legislative mandate justifying the involvement of ECLAC in activities stemming from the Summit of the Americas held at Miami. One delegation expressed regret that some delegations that had participated in the Summit of the Americas had questioned the legislative mandate relating to that Summit.

Conclusions and recommendations

212. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 19, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction, with the following modification: in paragraph 19.58 (c), the acronym "CARICOM" should be added after the acronym "SIECA".

Section 20. Economic and social development in Western Asia

213. At its 20th meeting, on 24 June 1997, the Committee considered section 20, Economic and social development in Western Asia, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

214. Some delegations expressed their support for the programme of work and underlined the importance they attached to the follow-up to the programmes of action adopted by the recent global conferences as well as to the strengthening of cooperation among Member States of the region.

215. One delegation noted with concern the increase in the overall resources requested under the section and considered that resources should decrease as a result of the streamlined structure derived from the reform process. Other delegations considered that the overall resources were commensurate with the proposed programme of work. They expressed the hope that once re-established in its headquarters at Beirut, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would be in a better position to implement fully all its mandated activities.

Conclusions and recommendations

216. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 20, Economic and social development in Western Asia, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction.

Section 21. Regular programme of technical cooperation

217. At its 20th and 22nd meetings, on 24 and 25 June 1997, the Committee considered section 21, Regular programme of technical cooperation, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

218. A number of delegations expressed their support for the proposals under this section. Some delegations stressed the importance of the section for the least developed countries and countries with economies in transition. Several delegations were of the view that paragraph 21.3 of the document should be revised to include an indication that the activities of the section should be carried out for the benefit of all developing countries.

219. Many delegations supported the proposed allocation of additional resources under section 21, especially for crime prevention and criminal justice and for the drug control programme. Many delegations expressed concern at the imbalance observed in the distribution of resources within the programme. The same delegations also regretted that there were no resources allocated for the implementation of activities under the subprogramme related to the right to development.

220. Some delegations regretted that the Secretariat was not in a position at the present time to inform the Committee of the actual stage of implementation of the decentralization process and stressed the importance of decentralization in that regard.

221. One delegation emphasized the importance of allocating regular budget resources under the programme to the subregional activities in the Caribbean undertaken in accordance with programme 17 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, which it was observed would be in keeping with the stated intention of the United Nations and of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean to address the needs and concerns of small island developing countries. In that connection, that delegation recommended the insertion in paragraph 21.53 of section 21 of a specific reference to subprogramme 17.11, Subregional activities in the Caribbean.

222. Concerning paragraph 21.23 (a) (i), one delegation questioned the legislative mandate for including services for electoral assistance under the section and proposed the deletion of the reference.

Conclusions and recommendations

223. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 21, Regular programme of technical cooperation, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, with the following modification: in the first sentence of paragraph 21.3, the words "developing countries, in particular" should be added after the words "oriented towards the needs of".

224. The Committee also recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to implement fully the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in paragraph V.46 of its report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 (A/50/7), which required the strengthening of the monitoring, evaluation and control of resources used in the programme.

Section 22. Human rights

225. At its 15th meeting, on 19 June 1997, the Committee considered section 22, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

226. A number of delegations expressed their support for the programme of work proposed in the section and emphasized that the promotion of human rights was one of the priorities of the United Nations in the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001. Some concern at the reduction in resources was also expressed, as was the view that the level of the proposed resources would not be sufficient to implement all existing mandates. Some delegations considered that not all existing mandates had been sufficiently reflected in the programme of work. Several delegations were of the view that the level of funds should be increased through transfers from other budget sections. Others opposed any reallocation or transfer of resources, which could affect developmental activities of the United Nations.

227. Several delegations expressed concern and requested information about the new structure of the programme, which contains the former subprogrammes included in the current medium-term plan, as well as information on the criteria used for resource allocations within subprogrammes. It was the view of those delegations that the aforementioned information would be indispensable for the General Assembly to make a serious examination of the budget proposal and make a decision to that effect.

228. Several delegations expressed concern at the low level of resources proposed for subprogramme 1 and considered that the subprogramme should have received more resources, in particular for activities related to the right to development, especially in view of the historical neglect of that right. Others observed that the activities regarding the right to development were adequately reflected in the proposed programme of work. Some delegations expressed concern at the reduction of resources under subprogrammes 2 and 3.

229. One delegation expressed concern at the low level of resources proposed for activities related to the implementation of the programme for the Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, taking into account, in particular, the recommendation of the Commission on Human Rights, at its fifty-third session, to convene a world conference on the subject in the year 2001, at the latest.

230. A number of delegations questioned the criteria for the distribution of resources between policy-making organs, substantive activities and support services, as well as between and within subprogrammes. Some of those delegations considered that such information would be needed in order to facilitate the review of the budget proposals by the General Assembly and its decision thereon. Several delegations felt that in subprogrammes 1 and 3 more detailed information should have been provided on the resources for each component, such as the right to development and research and analysis under subprogramme 1, and advisory services and technical cooperation, fact-finding procedures and field activities under subprogramme 3.

231. Several delegations considered that too much emphasis had been placed on human rights at the national level and that the synergy of human rights at the international and national levels was not sufficiently highlighted. Several delegations considered that preventive human rights actions were not adequately

reflected. Some felt that economic, social and cultural rights were not sufficiently addressed. Several delegations rejected the specific reference made to special and thematic procedures and to the mention of countries, owing to the fact that the Secretariat could not foresee if those mandates would be maintained for the next biennium. Those delegations deemed it a violation of the provisions that established that the new mandates adopted by the General Assembly would be financed by the contingency fund. Likewise, those delegations observed that the presentation of the proposal led to the establishment of a contingency micro-fund in the section, taking into account that the already mentioned activities could not be considered of a perennial nature. Other delegations emphasized that it was financially prudent to include full provision for those activities, and pointed out that, in any event, not all mandates were reviewed on an annual basis. Some delegations felt that the description of the activities of the special rapporteurs and of the related reports was too detailed and should have been more general, without mention of countries by name.

232. Several delegations considered that the programme of work was well-balanced and supported the increase in resources for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, especially for the New York Office. Others were concerned that the redeployment of resources to the Office of the High Commissioner would weaken the substantive programme of work of the Centre for Human Rights. One delegation expressed concern about the large increase in the personnel of the New York Office. It would be necessary to present a clear report on the tasks that those new staff members were to fulfil before any final decision in that regard was taken.

233. A number of delegations felt that the explanations given in paragraph 22.24 regarding the non-inclusion of resources for the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families should be redrafted in a more positive way so as to avoid giving the impression that a judgement had already been made that the respective convention would not enter into force in the biennium 1998-1999. One delegation expressed its satisfaction with the paragraph as drafted.

234. Some delegations supported the activities of the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus, but considered that the level of resources proposed for the activities of the third member were excessive.

235. Recalling the provisions of General Assembly resolution 51/219, section II, paragraph 4, by which it adopted programme 19, Human rights, of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, without prejudice to consideration by the Assembly of the ongoing process of restructuring the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat, some delegations considered that the appropriate intergovernmental analysis of the Centre's restructuring process had yet to be made. Other delegations considered that no such analysis was required. Several delegations expressed their support for the restructuring of the Centre for Human Rights. Other delegations considered that the restructuring of the Centre should be guided by the principles set out in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and directed to the full implementation of all mandates.

236. Different delegations proposed the following modifications to the text of section 22:

(a) In paragraph 22.1:

(i) In the first sentence, after the word "cultural", the word "or" would be replaced with a comma and, after the word "humanitarian", the words "educational and health" would be added;

(ii) The second sentence would be revised to read:

"International cooperation should be greatly enhanced and coordination and effectiveness of United Nations human rights machinery further increased. The programme ...";

(iii) A new sentence would be added after the first sentence to read:

"It is based on the principles and recommendations of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action";

(iv) In the second sentence, the words "improving respect ... more efficient" would be replaced with the following:

"providing leadership on human rights issues and emphasizing the importance of human rights on the international and national agendas, improving respect for human rights at the national level, through, inter alia, promoting universal ratification of basic international human rights treaties and the incorporation of those standards into the domestic legislation of States, the adoption of a comprehensive and integrated United Nations approach to the promotion and protection of human rights, including by stimulating and coordinating action across the whole United Nations system";

(v) In the second sentence, the following would be inserted after the words "focuses on":

"measures to identify, inter alia, ways and means for adoption of a more balanced and even-handed approach towards the promotion and protection of all aspects of all human rights, in particular with due regard to bridging the persisting gap between civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights, as well as";

(vi) Also in the second sentence, the words "at the national level" would be replaced with the words "at the national and international levels";

(vii) Also in the same sentence, the word "all" would be inserted after the words "protection of";

(viii) Also in the same sentence, the word "all" would be inserted after the words "realization of";

(b) In paragraph 22.2:

(i) The words "and, subsequently" would be replaced with the words "which has been entrusted to the open-ended working group of the Third Committee by decision 48/508";

(ii) After the word "effectiveness" the words "in order to avoid any unnecessary duplication" would be inserted;

(c) In paragraph 22.3:

(i) The first sentence would be replaced by the following:

"In order to respond to the new global and integrated approach to human rights based on the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, which emphasized the interrelated, interdependent and indivisible characters of all human rights, a restructuring and reorganizational process of the programme of human rights and the Centre for Human Rights, respectively, has been initiated. The scope and consequences of such a process have to be assessed and should be directed to the full implementation of the objectives of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action";

(ii) The third sentence would be replaced by the following:

"The programme will be implemented through a provisional new management structure established in 1996 that is yet pending approval by the pertinent intergovernmental bodies";

(d) In paragraph 22.4:

(i) In the first sentence, after the words "research and analysis," the words "including dealing with emerging problems and developing new standards and instruments", would be added;

(ii) In the same sentence, the words "adoption of a multidimensional strategy for the right to development" would be replaced with the words "adoption and implementation of an integrated and multidimensional strategy for the promotion and protection of the right to development";

(e) In paragraph 22.5:

(i) In the first sentence, after the words "rule of law", the words "the establishment of national institutions", would be inserted;

(ii) In the second sentence, after the word "include", the words "anticipating serious violations of human rights and reacting to violations", would be inserted;

(iii) In the same sentence, the words "effective human rights field activities and operations" would be deleted;

(iv) Also in the same sentence, after the words "implementation of a strengthened", the words "rationalized and harmonized" would be inserted;

(v) At the end of the same sentence, the words "based on harmonization and rationalization of work" would be replaced with the words "in order to enable them to carry out their mandates in all countries throughout the world";

(f) Paragraph 22.24 would be replaced by the following:

"Resources for the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in 1998-1999 will be submitted when the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families enters into force.

Greater efforts will be made in promoting the implementation of the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in 1998-1999";

(g) In paragraph 22.29:

(i) After the words "High Commissioner", the words "and the Centre for Human Rights" would be inserted;

(ii) The words "which have the relevant legislative mandates" would be inserted between the words "activities" and "New York-based organizations";

(h) In paragraph 22.33, the word "monitoring" would be replaced with the word "cooperation";

(i) In paragraph 22.37, at the end of the paragraph, after the words "human rights", the words "including dealing with emerging problems" would be added;

(j) Paragraph 22.37 would be revised to read:

"The activities carried out under this subprogramme will focus on: (a) developing an integrated and multidimensional strategy for the implementation, coordination and promotion of the Declaration on the Right to Development and subsequent mandates and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and (b) undertaking research and analysis for the purpose of promoting, enhancing and protecting all human rights, including the right to development";

(k) In the first sentence of paragraph 22.38, after the words "to be taken by", the words "relevant bodies of the United Nations system, including" would be inserted;

(l) In paragraph 22.40 (c) (i), the words "good governance" would be replaced with the words "accountable governance";

(m) In paragraph 22.53, the first sentence would end after the words "technical cooperation projects", and the words "provide support to human rights" would be replaced with the words "It also provides, at the request of Governments concerned, where applicable, support to human rights";

(n) In paragraph 22.55:

(i) In the first sentence, the words "objective and impartial" would be inserted between the words "preparation of" and "information";

(ii) At the end of the first sentence, the words "taking duly into account the principles of objectivity, impartiality, non-selectivity and transparency in the use of information" would be added;

(o) In the first sentence of paragraph 22.56, the words "and others" would be deleted;

(p) In paragraph 22.57 (c):

(i) In subparagraph (i), after the word "coordination", the words "in accordance with the relevant legislative mandates" would be inserted;

(ii) In subparagraph (ii), after the words "academic institutions", the words "which enjoy advisory relations with the Economic and Social Council, under its resolutions 1296 (XLIV) and 1996/31" would be inserted.

Conclusions and recommendations

237. The Committee was unable to reach agreement on a recommendation to the General Assembly that it approve the programme narrative of section 22, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999. It therefore recommended to the Assembly that, when considering the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, it review the programme narrative of section 22, paying due attention to the observations in paragraph 236 above.

Section 23. Protection of and assistance to refugees

238. At its 18th meeting, on 23 June 1997, the Committee considered section 23, Protection of and assistance to refugees, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

239. Several delegations expressed support and appreciation for the important work carried out by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in addressing the problems of refugees as well as the other activities it undertakes, together with other United Nations agencies, in the event of humanitarian emergencies. Some delegations expressed support in particular for UNHCR activities to promote and elaborate comprehensive regional solutions and for the training programmes for national authorities and operational partners in the field.

240. Several delegations expressed support for activities addressing the specific needs of women and children. It was also stated that assistance to internally displaced persons should be provided by other agencies such as the International Committee of the Red Cross in order to enable UNHCR to use its resources in the areas that fall directly under its mandate.

241. Some delegations commended the enhancement of efficiency through Project Delphi, strongly endorsed the signing of the memorandum of understanding with other United Nations agencies as a means of reducing cost and avoiding duplication, and noted with appreciation the striking reforms being undertaken. Other delegations expressed concern about the proposed staff reductions.

242. Some delegations noted that, in subprogramme 2, assistance to receiving countries was not mentioned. The Secretariat explained that UNHCR always ensured that its assistance benefited local residents as well as refugees.

243. Some delegations requested clarification on how UNHCR intended to deal with any exodus of the population resulting from conflicts. Clarification was also

sought on a similar point regarding refugees who had become a destabilizing force; one delegation suggested that assistance to those refugees be discontinued. The Secretariat explained that UNHCR acted in accordance with its mandate, the provisions of pertinent conventions and any additional legislative mandates adopted by the General Assembly.

244. One delegation expressed serious concern about the lack of transparency in announcing training events for government officials and non-governmental partners on refugee law as well as on technical cooperation. The Secretariat indicated that information was disseminated through UNHCR field offices as well as at its Geneva headquarters. The same delegation stated that not all UNHCR field offices disseminated such information. Therefore, it was necessary that such information be disseminated well in advance and in a non-discriminatory manner so as to provide all Member States with the opportunity to take part in and benefit from those training programmes.

245. One delegation proposed the following modification to the narrative of the section:

In the first sentence of paragraph 23.11, the words "by reintegration assistance" would be replaced with the words "and planned in both host country and country of origin, especially in the developing countries where the feasibility of repatriation is highly dependent on the existence of promising socio-economic infrastructures".

Conclusions and recommendations

246. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 23, Protection of and assistance to refugees, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction, with the following modifications:

(a) In paragraph 23.3, under item (a), the word "movements" would be replaced by the word "displacement" and the word "comprehensive" would be inserted before the word "solutions";

(b) Also in paragraph 23.3, a new item (d) would be added to read: "To provide humanitarian assistance for the care and maintenance of refugees in an appropriate manner, on the basis of the principle of international burden sharing and solidarity; due attention shall be given to the prolonged presence of refugees, in particular in the developing countries" and the subsequent items would be renumbered accordingly;

(c) In paragraph 23.7, the following sentence would be added at the end of the paragraph: "Decentralization as well as delegation of authority and distribution of resources, where applicable, to regional offices would lead to better performance and provide the flexibility needed";

(d) In paragraph 23.10 (c) (vi), after the words "comprehensive regional solutions", the following sentence would be added: "These solutions should be realistic and on the basis of specific situations";

(e) In paragraph 23.11, in the first sentence, the word "resettlement" would be inserted after the words "local settlement".

Section 24. Palestine refugees

247. At its 18th meeting, on 23 June 1997, the Committee considered section 24, Palestine refugees, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

248. Many delegations expressed firm support for the activities carried out by the programme and expressed the hope that the parties concerned would resume negotiations. A number of delegations stressed the importance of the programme, in particular as it related to the framework of the peace process. Some delegations welcomed the cooperation between the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the World Health Organization (WHO) and with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Some delegations expressed a high degree of regard for the staff of UNRWA and encouraged them to continue to support the execution of the Agency's programmes. The same delegations expressed the hope that the necessary resources for implementation of the programme could be guaranteed. One delegation commented on the detailed and clear presentation of the programme of work of the section and encouraged the Secretary-General to ensure that adequate regular budget and extrabudgetary resources would be provided to the section. One delegation, while indicating the commitment accorded by his Government to the activities of UNRWA and the vital role it played on the issue of Palestine refugees, said that section 24 did not mention efforts made for the further streamlining of the Agency's activities.

Conclusions and recommendations

249. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative for section 24, Palestine refugees, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Section 25. Humanitarian assistance

250. At its 18th meeting, on 23 June 1997, the Committee considered section 25, Humanitarian assistance, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

251. Many delegations expressed support for the activities of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. They supported the priorities proposed under the programme of work, in particular the emphasis placed on the strengthening of the coordinating function of the Department, and the proposed level and distribution of the resources within the section. Some delegations expressed their appreciation for the outstanding contribution of the Department to the activities of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Chernobyl and emphasized that it should be strengthened further.

252. Several delegations expressed concern at the high dependence of the Department on extrabudgetary funding and considered that the situation was not in line with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 51/194 of 17 December 1996. Other delegations stressed that all activities of the

Organization should be given assured funding and that over-reliance on extrabudgetary resources should be avoided.

253. Some delegations emphasized the importance of the demining activities carried out by the Department and the need for close coordination with similar activities of other departments of the Secretariat and other relevant entities. They also emphasized the need for a more active role of the Department in advocacy for a global ban on the use, stockpiling, production and export of anti-personnel landmines. One delegation stressed that the United Nations needed to be empowered to ensure that no restrictions were applied by any State that would hinder or otherwise impede, in any manner, access to mine-clearance technology. It should also provide the necessary financial means to fulfil those charges. The same delegation emphasized that relevant resolutions of intergovernmental bodies should be taken into account, in particular paragraph 12 of General Assembly resolution 51/149 of 13 December 1996.

254. With respect to disaster reduction activities, some delegations stressed that this work was largely about long-term national capacity-building and, as such, should be carried out by the United Nations Development Programme rather than the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

255. Several delegations referred to the ongoing restructuring of the Secretariat and considered that there should be a more intensive dialogue between Member States and the Secretary-General on the restructuring of United Nations humanitarian activities. Some delegations recommended that decisions on the role of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs not be taken until the reform proposals of the Secretary-General on track II had been announced and considered.

256. Some delegations stressed the need for full implementation by the Secretariat of the recommendations on the in-depth evaluation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, as reviewed and recommended by the Committee at its current session.

257. One delegation emphasized that humanitarian assistance should not be scaled down prematurely and that adequate resources should be provided for the smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation and development efforts.

Conclusions and recommendations

258. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 25, Humanitarian assistance, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction.

Section 26. Public information

259. At its 24th meeting, on 27 June 1997, the Committee considered section 26, Public information, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

260. Delegations expressed their full support for the activities under the section and the programme of public information. Those delegations stressed the

importance of disseminating information on the activities of the Organization throughout the world and the strategic role played by the Department of Public Information as information disseminator in order to enhance the image of the Organization and to promote an informed understanding of the work of the United Nations among the peoples of the world through the implementation of mandated programme activities.

261. A number of delegations expressed their appreciation for the efforts made to streamline and restructure public information programmes in the light of the reduction in resources. Many delegations indicated that the reduction in resources and the reorientation of the activities of the Department should not adversely affect the quality of services provided in the performance of its mandates. They stressed that the mandates of the Department should be pursued in its reorientation. Other delegations felt that the implementation of the programme of work could be achieved from the overall resources proposed.

262. In connection with the dissemination of information through electronic networks and databases, many delegations expressed appreciation for the technological innovations introduced in that respect. Those delegations stressed, however, that the use of advanced technologies should not be made at the expense of the more traditional methods for disseminating information, such as print, posters, radio programmes and audio-visual media since, in a number of countries, access to information was available only in those media. Under the circumstances, the dissemination of information through print and radio programmes should continue to be pursued. A number of delegations cautioned that in a number of countries, advances in technologies were not yet in place. The Department should take into consideration, therefore, the various capacities of Member States in accessing information. Those delegations felt that the primary consideration should be the widest dissemination of information to all peoples of the world. Other delegations expressed full support for the dissemination of information through the electronic media since it would significantly reduce the level of resources required for the implementation of the mandates of the Department. Some delegations felt that the Department should reinforce its current relations with national print and broadcast networks.

263. A number of delegations expressed concern at the inequality in the use of languages by the Department. Those delegations considered that the General Assembly resolution on multilingualism should be strictly adhered to and that information products should be in all official languages of the United Nations. They expressed regret that certain publications were not translated into the six official languages, in accordance with what had been adopted in the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997, and they favoured modifying paragraph 26.39 as follows:

> In paragraph 26.39 (i) a., after the words "UN Chronicle", the words "(six issues annually, in English and French)" would be replaced with the words "(six issues annually, in all official languages)".

The representative of the Secretary-General indicated that in disseminating information, the Department strived to reach the widest possible audience. It was pointed out that public information materials were not official documents, and that while information products should be in the working languages of the United Nations (English and French), to the extent possible and insofar as resources permitted, those information products were disseminated in the languages required, sometimes in the six official languages, and in other languages, depending on the local needs of the regional areas concerned. The

most important consideration for the programme of public information was to ensure that the widest possible audience was reached and informed of the activities of the Organization.

264. Many delegations supported the work of the United Nations information centres and stressed the importance of strengthening the role of those centres in developing countries. Some delegations, while appreciating the strengthening of information centres, expressed concern that while information centres in the developed countries were being strengthened, those in the developing countries might be integrated with other United Nations programmes. In that regard, one delegation emphasized the importance of prior consultations with individual Governments that might be affected directly by the process of integration.

265. Some delegations felt that the proposed significant transfer of resources from the information service at Vienna to another information centre might have a negative impact on the implementation of the activities of that office. Those delegations also expressed their concern about the reductions proposed under the activities of the information service at Geneva.

266. Some delegations expressed concern at the imbalance in the dissemination of information for different areas of work of the United Nations, by emphasizing peacekeeping operations. They stressed that appropriate attention should be given to the developmental activities of the United Nations.

Conclusions and recommendations

267. The Committee took note of the programme narrative of section 26, Public information, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration, as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction, with the following modification:

> With reference to paragraph 26.39, the Committee recommended that the languages used for the published materials be reviewed, in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions, in particular General Assembly resolution 50/11 of 2 November 1995 on multilingualism.

Section 27. Administrative services

268. At its 25th to 27th meetings, on 27 and 30 June 1997, the Committee considered section 27, Administrative services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999. It had before it the proposed programme budgets in respect of subsections 27A, Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, 27B, Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, 27D, Support services, 27F, Administration, Geneva, 27G, Administration, Vienna, and 27H, Administration, Nairobi, of section 27.

269. The Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management introduced section 27, indicating that the Department of Administration and Management would be taking the lead in the implementation of the Secretary-General's proposed reorientation and transformation of the management of the United Nations. Furthermore, he indicated that the focus of the work for the next biennium would be on strengthening management, strategic planning and performance monitoring functions. High priority would be given to the effective and coherent exercise of management functions, the establishment and maintenance of clear lines of responsibility and accountability and enhancement of the

responsiveness of the Secretariat to the changing and growing needs of the Organization.

270. The attention of the Committee was drawn to the diversity of work of the Department of Administration and Management, activities of which included the management of financial resources, human resources and support operations. Those services provided the backbone for the efficient and effective functioning of the work of the Organization, and efficient administrative services paved the way for the useful and timely delivery of outputs and services to Member States.

Discussion

271. A number of delegations were pleased to note that the Department of Administration and Management would take the lead in the implementation of the Secretary-General's proposed reorientation and transformation of the management of the United Nations. A large number of delegations expressed appreciation for the importance accorded to the activities of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the additional post requested to service the Committee. Many delegations attached great importance to the activities of section 27 and appreciated the serious attempts made in achieving reductions.

272. Several delegations were concerned that the proposals of the Secretary-General in connection with subsection 27C, Human resources management, and subsection 27E, Conference services, of section 27, Administrative services, had not been issued at the time of the review of the section by the Committee.

273. With regard to gratis personnel, some delegations expressed concern about the use of gratis personnel in this section, indicating that recourse to such personnel should have been only in cases where skills were not available in the Organization. The same delegations indicated that justifications on the particular skills possessed by those gratis personnel should have been provided in the programme narrative. They expressed the view that, had resources for posts been provided to carry out the activities of the programme, gratis personnel would not have been required. Those delegations pointed out that gratis personnel should not perform functions of a delicate or confidential character, for example in the areas of administration of justice and procurement. Another delegation pointed to the conflict of interest when gratis personnel performed functions that should be performed by staff recruited under the relevant rules and regulations of the Organization.

274. Many delegations commented on the need to restructure the Procurement and Transportation Division, taking into account the resolution on procurement reform adopted by the General Assembly (51/231 of 13 June 1997), including projection of staff requirements and the filling of posts by United Nations personnel.

Conclusions and recommendations

275. The Committee took note of the narratives contained in the proposed programme budget of subsections 27A, 27B, 27D, 27F, 27G and 27H of section 27, Administrative services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction. The Committee noted with regret that it did not have the proposals in respect of subsections 27C, Human resources and management, and 27E, Conference services. In the absence of proposals related to those

subprogrammes, the Committee was not in a position to make any comments in connection with the Secretary-General's proposals in that regard.

276. The Committee took note of the explanation of the Secretariat that in the past the Committee had not reviewed the sections of the proposed programme budget relating to administrative services. Consequently, in the context of the issuance of the fascicles, that section was scheduled to be issued last to enable the timely release of those sections that historically had been considered by the Committee. Unfortunately, the demands on documentation arising from the special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21 resulted in further delay of the issuance, in all the official languages, of subsections 27C and 27E.

Section 28. Internal oversight

277. At its 17th meeting, on 20 June 1997, the Committee considered section 28, Internal oversight, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999. The section was introduced by the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services, who explained that the proposed increase in resources was largely deferred growth from 1996-1997 and that the Office was still new and adjusting to growing demands.

Discussion

278. Many delegations expressed full support for the role of the Office and the tasks entrusted to it. Those delegations underlined the importance of the mandate of the Office and stressed that the Office had developed into a very useful and indispensable part of the machinery of the Organization. Some delegations felt that the relationship, coordination and cooperation between the Office and other external oversight machineries should have been reflected in the programme of work. Several delegations stressed that the Office did not have the mandate to alter the main programmes of the Organization. Other delegations felt that it was a proper function of the Office to provide support to intergovernmental bodies in that regard. Several delegations objected to the words "by altering their content and, if necessary, reviewing their objectives" in paragraph 28.17 and proposed their deletion.

279. Several delegations welcomed the emphasis given to monitoring and evaluation. Other delegations felt that the relationship between the Office and operational funds and programmes should have been more clearly defined. Several delegations expressed strong objections to the wording of the narrative in paragraph 28.63 of subprogramme 4, Investigations, and proposed that it be modified and carefully reworded.

280. Some delegations expressed concern at the number of gratis personnel under the section and pointed out that their use was incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations.

281. Some delegations questioned the growth proposed for the programme in comparison with other programmes, in particular with respect to resources proposed for equipment and general operating expenses and the need for a separate administrative unit, taking into account that the programme was not a priority of the Organization. Other delegations expressed concern about the progressive increase in resources requested under the section and that the

growth requested had not been fully justified. Those delegations pointed out that while the Office recommended efficiency measures and resource reductions for other programmes and sections, no such proposals were reflected under the section. Those delegations indicated that, in view of the financial difficulties of the Organization, the Office of Internal Oversight Services was expected to identify efficiency gains within the Office and should serve as a model in minimizing its demand for resources. Other delegations fully supported the resources proposed under the section and emphasized the necessity of providing adequate resources for the Office in order to fulfil its functions. Those delegations considered that the resources provided to the Office were more than compensated by significant savings already identified by the Office. A number of delegations noted the disproportionately low level of resources allocated to subprogramme 1, Central evaluation, in comparison to the other subprogrammes of the section. Other delegations considered that the Office should be provided with the resources to fully develop its role and that the expenditure was compensated by the savings achieved.

Conclusions and recommendations

282. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 28, Internal oversight, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to the following modification:

> In paragraph 28.63, the first part of the first sentence would be deleted so that the sentence would read: "The section established an office in Nairobi in 1996".

Section 29. Jointly financed administrative activities

283. At its 18th meeting, on 23 June 1997, the Committee considered section 29, Jointly financed administrative activities, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

284. A number of delegations expressed concern about the significant reductions in the appropriations proposed for the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and the Joint Inspection Unit. Some delegations requested that they be provided with an explanation of the difference between net budgeting and gross budgeting. Other delegations requested clarifications on what action would be required from the General Assembly in respect of the budget proposals of ICSC and JIU.

285. The representative of the Secretary-General indicated that the apparently significant reductions in the appropriations requested for the Commission and the Unit resulted from net budgeting. He recalled that during previous bienniums appropriations requested under the expenditure section related to the total costs of ICSC and JIU, with the reimbursement from other organizations being credited to the United Nations under income section 2. In order to reflect more accurately the true level of expenditures attributable to the regular budget, the appropriations requested for the Commission and the Unit in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 related exclusively to the United Nations share of the costs of those activities, with no credit being made under the income section. However, the proposed programme budget for the

biennium 1998-1999 for the full costs of both ICSC and JIU, namely, the gross 1998-1999 budget proposals, were still being presented to the General Assembly for its consideration and approval. Action required by the Assembly would be as follows:

(a) To approve the gross budgets of the Commission and the Unit, under the terms of their respective statutes, as proposed under the relevant tables under the section, namely, $11,566,100 for ICSC and $8,982,600 for JIU. Approval by the Assembly of the gross budgets would constitute the basis for other participating organizations to meet their share of the full costs of ICSC and JIU;

(b) To approve the related appropriation requested under the regular budget of the United Nations, representing the United Nations share of the total costs of ICSC and JIU, namely, $3,322,900 and $1,880,100 for the Commission and the Unit, respectively.

Conclusions and recommendations

286. The Committee took note of the narrative of section 29, Jointly financed administrative activities, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999. The Committee also took note of the parallel actions required by the General Assembly, namely, to approve the gross budgets of ICSC and JIU and to approve the related appropriation requested under the net budgets of those activities.

Section 31. Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance

287. At its 17th meeting, on 20 June 1997, the Committee considered section 31, Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

288. Many delegations welcomed the emphasis placed on major maintenance of United Nations properties, and expressed full support for the proposals in the section. Some delegations expressed the view that instead of undertaking a "catch-up" maintenance programme, a programme of preventive maintenance would be more cost-effective. One delegation stated that the priority for the programme of alteration and improvement should be focused on areas where meetings were held. Another delegation expressed the view that the programme of alteration, improvement and major maintenance should ensure that acceptable working conditions were provided to both staff working in the buildings and those attending meetings. One delegation, while supporting the importance of the maintenance of buildings, stated that, in view of the difficult financial situation of the Organization, the resources allocated to it should be reduced. Other delegations expressed full support for the resources requested under the section. A number of delegations stressed the need to preserve the architectural integrity of the structures of all United Nations buildings.

Conclusions and recommendations

289. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly examine further and consider the approval of the narrative of section 31, Alteration, improvement and major maintenance.

B. Evaluation

1. In-depth evaluation of the programme on statistics

290. At its 2nd and 3rd meetings, on 9 and 10 June 1997, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the statistics programme transmitted to it under cover of a note by the Secretary-General stating his concurrence with the recommendations contained in the report (E/AC.51/1997/2).

Discussion

291. Most delegations stated that they found the recommendations acceptable and agreed with the focus of the evaluation on ascertaining users' needs and providing services to them. Several delegations noted the resource implications of the findings in the report that the programme's activities and resources are too heavily concentrated on the production of publications (para. 83) and that the development of the United Nations Economic and Social Information System (UNESIS) required reconfiguration of the work flow, new staff with different skills, the acquisition of technology and retraining of staff (para. 43). Most delegations supported the rationalization of statistical publications. The rationalization should be carried out on a gradual basis, taking duly into consideration the needs and realities of developing countries, which would continue to benefit from the distribution of free print publications until they had full access to new technologies. Several delegations cautioned that commercial viability might not coincide with the importance of a publication to Member States, especially methodological and technical publications. Several delegations noted the uneven distribution of technological capacity among Member States. Some delegations urged that the programme's strengths and contributions should be given emphasis during the United Nations reform process and the restructuring of the Secretariat in the economic and social sectors.

Conclusions and recommendations

292. The Committee commended the report for its thorough review of the programme and agreed with its characterization of the statistics programme as an example of the type of activities that the United Nations did well, and which served important needs of States.

293. The Committee endorsed the recommendations in the report on the understanding that the Director of the Statistics Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the Secretariat would propose an implementation plan and timetable to the 1998 meeting of the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Coordination of the Statistical Commission. The Committee's endorsement was on the understanding that the United Nations would continue to issue a number of publications as a matter of record and for other non-commercial reasons.

294. The Committee considered that the implementation of the strategy proposed in the report, including the development of UNESIS, would require an enhancement of skill and technology and continuing technical assistance to enhance access of developing countries to new information technologies.

2. In-depth evaluation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs

295. At its 2nd to 4th meetings, from 9 to 11 June 1997, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs transmitted to it under cover of a note by the Secretary-General stating his concurrence with the recommendations contained in the report (E/AC.51/1997/3).

Discussion

296. Many delegations commented on the timeliness of the report since most of the issues analysed in it would be reviewed at the substantive session of 1997 of the Economic and Social Council under agenda item 8 entitled "Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance". Several delegations considered that the report and the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee on it would provide useful inputs to the work of the Council and any reform of the United Nations. One delegation stated that, since the recommendations in the report were endorsed by the Secretary-General, it was expected that they would be utilized in any reform in the field. Several delegations stated that the Committee should bear in mind that the Secretary-General would make reform proposals in the near future.

297. With regard to the section on relief and rehabilitation, one delegation expressed the view that humanitarian relief operations should not be wound up or scaled down prematurely as that had negative implications for the rehabilitation process that followed and that exit strategies for the Department of Humanitarian Affairs should be comprehensive, neutral and objective and should not be dictated by political considerations.

298. Delegations generally found the recommendations presented in the report sound and thoughtful. In the course of the debate, delegations made observations on the following recommendations:

(a) Recommendation 1. Several delegations stressed that administrative rules and regulations adapted to emergency activities should be adopted without delay;

(b) Recommendations 2 to 5. Several delegations considered that there should be more active support to natural disaster reduction as highlighted in that set of recommendations; one delegation stated that natural disaster reduction would be more effective in the context of a development programme, such as UNDP;

(c) Recommendation 6. Many delegations stressed the importance of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and strongly endorsed the recommended enhancement of the support of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to the work of the Standing Committee;

(d) Recommendations 7 and 8. Several delegations stressed the importance of achieving effective field coordination while minimizing the cost and

complexity of coordination arrangements. One delegation noted that coordination arrangements and the tasks carried out were agreed upon in consultation with the host country and some delegations stressed the need for coordination, with the operations being undertaken by the national Government. One delegation considered there was a need to explore possible ways and means to enhance the role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in order to bridge peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance activities;

(e) Recommendation 13. One delegation stressed that effective monitoring would increase accountability and a more coherent approach to emergency humanitarian assistance;

(f) Recommendation 14. Several delegations raised questions on the proposed briefings of the President of the Security Council by the Emergency Relief Coordinator and stressed that such briefings should be for the full membership of the Organization. Several delegations supported the recommendations as contained in the report while several others objected to that recommendation;

(g) Recommendations 16 and 17. One delegation expressed its view that an effective early-warning system would enhance the capability of the United Nations in implementing preventive measures and increasing the success of such measures.

299. Several delegations stressed that the share of regular budget resources allocated to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs should be increased to minimize the effects of the Department's reliance on extrabudgetary funding.

Conclusions and recommendations

300. The Committee expressed appreciation for the quality and comprehensive nature of the report.

301. The Committee considered that the activities of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs should remain within its mandate, which was primarily a coordinating role. In that respect, the Committee was in agreement with the main thrust of the report, which was (a) to strengthen the capacity of the Department to support effectively inter-agency cooperation and coordination, through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Emergency Relief Coordinator; and (b) to ensure that the Department did not become involved in operational activities, which were more effectively carried out by the operational programmes and agencies that were represented in the Standing Committee.

302. Subject to the different views expressed by delegations during the discussion, and subject to subsequent decisions of the Economic and Social Council and of the General Assembly on the coordination of humanitarian assistance at their upcoming sessions, the Committee endorsed recommendations 1 to 13 and 14 (b) to 22 as contained in the report.

303. The Committee considered that the in-depth evaluation report and the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee on it should be transmitted to the Economic and Social Council for consideration at its substantive session of 1997 under item 8 entitled "Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance".

3. Topics for future in-depth evaluation

304. At its 3rd meeting, on 10 June 1997, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on topics for future in-depth evaluation, transmitted to it under cover of a note by the Secretary-General stating his concurrence with the recommendations contained in the report (E/AC.51/1997/4).

Discussion

305. While delegations found the proposals in paragraph 7 of the report generally acceptable, they considered that some flexibility was needed for in-depth evaluations due in 1999 and 2000 to take into account forthcoming decisions on reform. Some delegations highlighted the advantages of joint consideration of the evaluation of crime prevention and criminal justice and international drug control. Several delegations stated that in addition to the considerations listed in paragraph 4 of the report, programmes that might be experiencing implementation difficulties should also be considered for in-depth evaluation. Some delegations expressed the view that the topics entitled "peacekeeping: start-up phase" and "peacekeeping: termination phase" should be treated in the appropriate order in the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

Recommendations

306. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the following schedule of in-depth evaluations, keeping in mind the need for desired flexibility to accommodate possible changes that might arise in the context of the reform proposals of the Secretary-General and subsequent decisions that might be adopted by the General Assembly:

1998 International drug control

Crime prevention and criminal justice

1999 Disarmament

Electoral assistance

2000 Global development trends, issues and policies, and global approaches to social and microeconomic issues and policies, and the corresponding subprogrammes in the regional commissions (programmes 7.3 and 7.4 of the medium-term plan)

Advancement of women

307. The Committee noted that, if necessary, it might revert to the consideration of the issue at an appropriate stage.

4. Triennial review of the in-depth evaluation of the United Nations programme on social development

308. At its 3rd meeting, on 10 June 1997, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the in-depth evaluation of the social development programme transmitted to it under cover of a note by the Secretary-General (E/AC.51/1997/5). The report did not contain recommendations.

Discussion

309. Many delegations considered the report's review of developments subsequent to the adoption of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development to be useful. Many delegations also found useful the information contained in the report on procedures for follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of the outcome of the Summit. Some delegations noted the low and late implementation rates for some components of the programme. One delegation considered that due importance was no longer being given to work on assisting the disabled. One delegation reaffirmed the importance of international cooperation and assistance in guaranteeing full implementation of the Programme of Action together with Governments, as established in paragraph 82 of the Programme of Action.

Action

310. The Committee took note of the report.

5. Review of the United Nations Environment Programme and the administrative practices of its secretariat, including the United Nations Office at Nairobi

311. At its 3rd and 4th meetings, on 10 and 11 June 1997, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the review of the United Nations Environment Programme and the administrative practices of its secretariat, including the United Nations Office at Nairobi (A/51/810), the management study recommended by the Committee at its thirty-fifth session as a follow-up to the in-depth evaluation of the programme on environment (E/AC.51/1995/3 and Corr.1).

Discussion

312. Members of the Committee were informed that the report had been presented to the Fifth Committee and discussed extensively in informal consultations and that, at its nineteenth session, the Governing Council of UNEP had adopted decisions pertinent to issues raised in the report; those issues would continue to receive attention during the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21. Several delegations expressed the view that Member States should be informed about the measures taken to address the issues raised in the report.

313. Several delegations underlined the role and mandate of UNEP as the focal point and a catalyst of the environmental activities of the United Nations

system. Several delegations considered that the reform should be restricted to management issues only.

314. Some delegations welcomed the completeness of the report, expressed concern about its findings and urged that the recommendations be put into effect without further delay.

Action

315. The Committee took note of the report and looked forward to the full implementation of its recommendations in accordance with the decisions of the Governing Council of UNEP at its nineteenth session.

IV. COORDINATION QUESTIONS

A. Report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination

316. At its 5th meeting, on 11 June 1997, the Committee considered the annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) for 1996 (E/1997/54 and Corr.1).

Discussion

317. The Committee welcomed the new improved format of the report, and commended the Secretariat for presenting the policy issues and information in a concise and focused manner. Some delegations found the report descriptive and expressed the wish for more analytical reports in the future where ACC would identify difficulties faced in implementing different mandates.

318. Delegations expressed support for the future directions identified in the Secretary-General's foreword to the report:

(a) That ACC should be a policy- and action-oriented instrument geared towards launching and monitoring concrete joint initiatives to accomplish common policy objectives;

(b) That there was a need for the organizations of the United Nations system to show at this critical juncture, beyond their individual accomplishments and reform efforts, also a collective capacity - a capacity as a system - for renewed cost-effectiveness and for adaptation and change;

(c) That there was a need for a new system-wide culture, which should be based on systematic policy consultations, effective decentralization, respect for organizations' mandates and competencies, and a common appreciation of the challenges ahead and of the respective strengths of the various organizations of the system in meeting them;

(d) That there was a need for improved interaction between ACC and intergovernmental bodies.

319. In general, members of the Committee recognized the efforts of ACC to strengthen coordination within the system and to perform a more effective role in bringing greater cohesion within the system. They requested ACC to maximize those efforts and looked forward to receiving a report on the results. Members stressed the need for ACC to continue to develop and launch concrete policy objectives and make a critical contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the reform and strengthening of the United Nations system. Some delegations emphasized the need for ACC to provide information on progress made in achieving those objectives in the context of its future reports. Members also stressed the need for ACC to continue to play a leading role in the coordination of policy guidelines and activities of the organizations of the system.

320. Some delegations stressed the view that priority areas in the work of ACC needed to be addressed in accordance with the priorities established by the Charter of the United Nations, the General Assembly and the current medium-term plans of the organizations of the system.

321. Regarding the issue of African economic recovery and development, a number of delegations welcomed the recognition by ACC of the need for ownership of programmes under the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. A call was made for a clear indication of the added value of the Special Initiative at both the national and international levels. Members welcomed the recognition by ACC of the need to find an acceptable resolution of the debt problems of African countries. Some delegations expressed the view that linkages between the Special Initiative and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s needed to be more clearly brought out and that resources should be identified for the implementation of the Special Initiative and the New Agenda.

322. On the issue of the coordinated follow-up to major international conferences, members welcomed the initiative taken by ACC to establish the ad hoc task forces. A question was raised as to whether the use of the ad hoc task forces had led to greater cost-effectiveness, and it was requested that a complete report on their work should be included in the next ACC annual overview report.

323. With regard to the ACC decision to establish an Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, one delegation, while welcoming the initiative for the advancement of women, emphasized that when ACC reviewed and acted on the recommendations of the Committee the proposed action should be in conformity with relevant provisions of the Charter.

324. A number of delegations expressed satisfaction with the continuing work of ACC in the area of assistance to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter. They emphasized that the imposition of sanctions on some countries had had adverse effects on the economies of a number of neighbouring countries, and requested ACC to continue to keep that issue under review. Some delegations underscored the need to adopt appropriate measures for assisting countries that had been affected by the sanctions imposed in connection with the implementation of Security Council resolutions 661 (1990) of 6 August 1990 and 724 (1991) of 15 December 1991.

325. Some delegations expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved by ACC, through its Consultative Committee on Programme and Operation Questions, in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/120 of 20 December 1995 on the triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/42 of 26 July 1996, in particular on the strengthening of the resident coordinator system, including the work related to the selection process and performance appraisal for resident coordinators, the promotion of training programmes and field coordination workshops.

326. On the subject of the functioning of ACC and its subsidiary machinery, a number of delegations welcomed the measures adopted by ACC and requested improved methods of work and streamlining of the inter-agency machinery to bring about greater effectiveness in promoting system-wide coordination. It was also noted that the co-location arrangements of the secretariats of the jointly financed bodies in Geneva would result in cost-effectiveness and improved performance.

327. With respect to administrative questions, some delegations expressed the view that the current conditions of service of international staff were sufficiently competitive and that the comments of ACC with respect to recruitment and retention difficulties had not been substantiated. They

regretted the tendency of some members of the system to deviate and/or withdraw from the common system. Delegations noted the explanations given by the Secretariat in that regard. Other delegations expressed the view, however, that based on studies undertaken by the International Civil Service Commission, consideration should be given to accepting the recommendations of the Commission pertaining to the need to improve the conditions of service. One delegation went further, noting that the issue had been overtaken by events since the General Assembly, at its fifty-first session, had decided not to accept the Commission's recommendations regarding a salary increase for Professional staff.

328. Some delegations requested information on progress achieved among the organizations of the United Nations system in the use of the Integrated Management Information System for administrative operations and reporting. They noted the explanations of the Secretariat that initial consultations with heads of organizations had recently been started, and that further action would be pursued, on behalf of ACC, by the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions.

329. With regard to the Joint Inspection Unit, a number of delegations reaffirmed the role and usefulness of JIU, which had been established by the General Assembly, expressed reservations on the recommendations of ACC with regard to JIU, and rejected a zero nominal budgetary growth for the 1998-1999 budget and that a study on the role and function of JIU should be undertaken. Other delegations stated, however, that the recommendations were entirely appropriate since the organizations of the United Nations system contributed to the budget of JIU on a cost-sharing basis and thus had a right to ensure that JIU performed its tasks satisfactorily, in accordance with its mandate and at the lowest possible cost.

330. On the subject of the financial and budgetary situation of the United Nations, some delegations expressed serious concern about the continuing accumulation of arrears as a result of non-payment of contributions and underlined the principle that all Member States should pay their assessments in full, in a timely manner and without conditions.

331. Members of the Committee welcomed the development, approval and implementation of common accounting standards and the harmonization of formats of financial reporting among the organizations of the system and encouraged their widest implementation since they considered that this should assist ACC in its coordination work. One delegation asked whether ACC planned in the near future to address ways of harmonizing and strengthening internal oversight capabilities among member organizations of ACC. One delegation expressed concern at the non-implementation of cost accounting standards in the United Nations in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 51/225 of 3 April 1997, and requested ACC to report to the Committee on the findings.

332. The Secretariat acknowledged the views expressed on the format and content of the report and noted the comments and observations, indicating that they would be transmitted to ACC members.

Conclusions

333. The Committee took note of the annual overview report of ACC, welcomed its new improved format, commended the Secretariat for a concise and well-focused report, and requested that future reports be more analytical than descriptive.

334. The Committee urged that the orientations identified by the Secretary-General in the foreword to the report on the role and functioning of ACC should guide the future activities of ACC.

335. The Committee agreed that ACC should continue to strengthen its role as a policy- and action-oriented instrument geared to launching and monitoring concrete joint initiatives to accomplish common policy objectives, and make an effective contribution to the implementation of efforts for reform and strengthening of the system. The Committee stressed that ACC, in carrying out its primary task of strengthening coordination of activities of the United Nations system, should focus on the strategic objectives established in the Charter, the General Assembly and the medium-term plans of the organizations of the system.

336. The Committee underscored the need for resource mobilization as a key element in ensuring the success of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. The Committee welcomed the efforts made to ensure government ownership of programmes under the Special Initiative at the country level. The Committee requested that the linkages between the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and the Special Initiative be clearly brought out.

337. The Committee took note with appreciation of the efforts of ACC to promote a coordinated and integrated system-wide approach to the follow-up to major international conferences through ad hoc inter-agency task forces, and requested that the results of the comprehensive assessment of the work of the task forces to be carried out by ACC in 1997 should be included in the next annual overview report of ACC.

338. The Committee took note of the information provided on assistance to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter and indicated its support for measures for assisting countries that had been affected by the implementation of Security Council resolutions 661 (1990) and 724 (1991). The Committee requested ACC to keep the item on its agenda and to include it in future reports.

B. Revised System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development and implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa

339. At its 8th meeting, on 16 June 1997, the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed revision to the System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (E/AC.51/1997/6) and the progress report on the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa (E/AC.51/1997/7).

Discussion

340. A number of delegations expressed concern and regret that the reports submitted did not establish the linkages between the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, the System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development and the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. They noted that while the New Agenda and the Plan of Action had been adopted by the General Assembly, the Special Initiative had emerged as an initiative of the United Nations system.

341. Some delegations noted that because the System-wide Plan of Action was not being effectively implemented, the Secretary-General and the Administrative Committee for Coordination had launched the Special Initiative in March 1996 as an operational arm of the United Nations system in its efforts to implement the New Agenda. Several delegations also noted that the Initiative held great promise for Africa as it focused on a selected number of well-targeted priority areas where tangible results could be realized in a short period of time.

342. A number of delegations sought clarification on the intergovernmental process that established the priority areas of the Special Initiative and ensured its ownership by African Member States. The Committee was informed that the scope, orientation and priority areas of the Special Initiative derived from the objectives and goals of the New Agenda and those of resolution AHG/RES.236 (XXXI) entitled "Relaunching Africa's economic and social development: the Cairo Agenda for Action" which was adopted on 28 June 1995 by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU at its thirty-first ordinary session (see A/50/647, annex II). The Committee was further informed that the Special Initiative had been endorsed in 1996 by the ECA Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning at their twenty-second meeting, and that the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU at its meeting at Harare in June 1997 had requested that the pace of implementation of the Special Initiative be accelerated and that the resource commitment, especially by the Bretton Woods institutions, be honoured.

343. A number of delegations expressed great concern at Africa's continued critical economic and social situation. They recognized that a number of initiatives and programmes had been launched in favour of Africa, but that so far little had been accomplished. Several others expressed concern about the proliferation of initiatives, which could lead to confusion and duplication of efforts.

344. Some delegations also sought clarification about the level of resources required and anticipated for the implementation of programmes under the Special Initiative. The Committee was informed that the strategy under the Special Initiative emphasized the rationalization of the use of existing resources. There was, however, considerable potential for the mobilization of additional resources from bilateral and multilateral sources to leverage national programmes, particularly through sector investment programmes. The level of resources to be mobilized would depend on individual country needs.

345. Some delegations also mentioned that debt was a critical impediment to African development, requiring further effort by the international community. In that regard, the recent initiative by the international financial institutions on multilateral debt was definitely a step in the right direction and should be continued and improved. Other delegations believed that the conditions governing that initiative should be relaxed.

346. One delegation expressed reservations regarding paragraph 12 (a) relating to the proposed assessment of water policies and paragraph 15 (a) relating to the proposed review of water legislation of the report on the proposed revision of the System-wide Plan of Action (E/AC.51/1997/6).

347. Some delegations emphasized that peace, stability and capacity-building were essential prerequisites for African development. Some delegations expressed appreciation for the role of UNESCO in implementing the initiative on basic education for all African children.

348. Several delegations underlined the importance of regional cooperation and integration, and economic diversification in Africa's development, the two priority areas in the New Agenda that were not directly covered or explicitly addressed under the Special Initiative. One delegation questioned the rationale for the establishment of a special fund or facility for Africa's commodities. The same delegation noted the importance of economic liberalization and the creation of an enabling environment for the development of the private sector in the promotion of diversification, and stressed that regional cooperation and integration strategies should take full account of the implications of a globalizing world economy.

349. A number of delegations commended the efforts of African countries to implement the New Agenda and highlighted the importance of South-South cooperation in order to support those efforts. In that connection, the same delegations noted that the Second Asia-Africa Forum had recently been held at Bangkok (11-13 June 1997) to discuss the question of economic cooperation and development and also as part of the ongoing preparations for the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development. The Forum was considered a good example of interregional collaboration, especially in the context of South-South cooperation.

350. A number of delegations observed that the present arrangements for coordination of the implementation of the New Agenda were not transparent enough to allow for a clear understanding of the respective roles of the units involved.

351. Some delegations welcomed the Special Initiative as the most practical way to support African development. In that regard, it was stated that the System-wide Plan of Action had no clear indication on commitment of resources by the organizations of the United Nations system, and that the Special Initiative was much more specific in that respect and could therefore be considered the focus of developmental action for Africa. Some other delegations nevertheless felt that the Special Initiative did not cover two priority areas, namely, regional economic cooperation and integration and diversification of African economies. The same delegations pointed out that there was no clear commitment on the funding of the Special Initiative of the priority areas.

352. A number of delegations pointed out that global coordination was essential and, therefore, concrete implementation of programmes and effective action for global coordination should be enhanced.

Conclusions and recommendations

353. The Committee took note of the two reports. The Committee reiterated the concern already expressed at its thirty-sixth session on the proliferation of initiatives on Africa and the need to avoid duplication, and stressed that the issue of financial resources required for implementation had not been addressed satisfactorily under either the System-wide Plan of Action or the Special Initiative.

354. The Committee recommended that, in view of the fact that the two areas of regional cooperation and integration and economic diversification were critical priority areas in Africa's development, the ACC Steering Committee for the Special Initiative should make the necessary arrangements for the elaboration of comprehensive programmes in respect of those areas, including measures for the

mobilization of adequate resources to buttress such programmes under the Special Initiative.

355. The Committee stressed the importance of an effective communication strategy to mobilize all the relevant parties and stakeholders under the Special Initiative in order to achieve results at the country level and to contribute to reinforcing African countries' ownership and leadership of the programmes.

356. The Committee recommended that, in order to assist in establishing a functional linkage between the New Agenda and the Special Initiative, the latter henceforth be referred to as the "United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s". In that regard, the Committee also recommended that:

(a) The global political advocacy and policy setting of the renamed Special Initiative, consistent with orientation guidelines and priorities deriving from mandates set up by Member States, remain under the leadership of the Secretary-General;

(b) General follow-up of the implementation of the Special Initiative and support to the Secretary-General's advocacy role within the established policy framework continue to be entrusted to the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries;

(c) Action-oriented activities for the implementation of the Special Initiative, including operational and coordination arrangements at the global, regional and national levels, follow-up, monitoring and mobilization of resources for concrete projects and programmes continue to be carried out by ECA and UNDP.

357. The Committee called upon the Secretary-General to rationalize and enhance the coordination mechanisms of the United Nations system at the national, regional and global levels to ensure that there was a clear delineation of responsibilities and to avoid possible duplication of efforts among the United Nations units and agencies involved in the follow-up, implementation and monitoring of the Special Initiative and the New Agenda.

358. The Committee recommended that, in order to ensure that future reports were more substantive and comprehensive, the relevant units responsible for coordination and implementation of programmes at the regional and country levels, as well as the Inter-Agency Task Force on African Economic Recovery and Development, be more fully involved in their preparation.

359. The Committee requested that a progress report on the renamed Special Initiative, which should include, inter alia, measures taken in response to the recommendations in paragraphs 356 and 357 above, be submitted to the Committee for consideration at its thirty-eighth session.

V. REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Coordination of policy and programming frameworks for more effective development cooperation

360. At its 5th meeting, on 11 June 1997, the Committee considered the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Coordination of policy and programming frameworks for more effective development cooperation" (A/51/636-E/1996/104) and the comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination thereon (A/52/115-E/1997/47). The report was presented to the Committee for Programme and Coordination by its author, Mr. Sumihiro Kuyama.

Discussion

361. Some delegations expressed their thanks to JIU for preparing an excellent study and described it as a high-quality analytical document, as well as a valuable and timely contribution to the current restructuring process in the economic, social and related fields of activity of the United Nations system. They also expressed their agreement with all the recommendations contained in the report.

362. A number of delegations stressed the importance of coordination, in particular at the country level. In that context, one delegation stated that the question of how to fill the lack of quantity with quality in development cooperation had become increasingly important. A number of delegations made specific reference to the existing multiplicity of policy and programming frameworks associated with development cooperation and confirmed its negative impact, as indicated in paragraphs 13 and 17 of the report. One delegation questioned the coordinating role of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and pointed out that such a role should be played exclusively by the Economic and Social Council itself. Other delegations reiterated the importance of the role of the Committee in the field of coordination. One delegation also raised the question of considering JIU reports in a timely manner in order to avoid repetitive discussions of similar topics. Several delegations pointed out the discrepancies between JIU and the Administrative Committee on Coordination on some issues, as they appeared in the report and the comments of ACC thereon. In addition to the general comments, delegations made specific observations on a number of recommendations contained in the report. Several delegations suggested that, in the future, the comments of ACC on JIU reports should be provided in a more timely manner.

363. One delegation expressed strong support for recommendation 1, which reflects the ongoing discussion in the Second Committee of the General Assembly.

364. One delegation stated that recommendation 2 could be further strengthened by adding a reference to the role to be played by Member States (donors) as well as by host Governments.

365. While supporting, in principle, the proposal made in recommendation 4, one delegation suggested hearing the views of the United Nations Development Programme on the idea of a data bank in the resident coordinator's office.

366. Concerning recommendation 6, one delegation held the view that the modality of regional coordination should take into account the prevailing circumstances

in each region; another delegation requested an elaboration of the role that could be played by the regional commissions.

367. One delegation expressed the belief that the thrust of recommendation 7 could be considered within the context of General Assembly resolution 50/227.

Conclusions and recommendations

368. The Committee generally commended the report and endorsed all the recommendations contained therein, taking into account the views expressed during the discussion. The Committee also proposed the following modification to recommendation 2:

> At the end of recommendation 2, a new sentence would be added, reading: "Member States (donors and host Governments) should facilitate this process."

369. The Committee decided that the report of the JIU, together with the comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination thereon, should be submitted to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly for consideration and appropriate action.

VI. CONSIDERATION OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE

370. In pursuance of paragraph 2 (e) of Economic and Social Council resolution 1979/41 of 10 May 1979, and paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 34/50 of 23 November 1979, the Committee shall submit to the Council and to the Assembly, for their review, the provisional agenda for its thirty-eighth session, together with the required documentation. In accordance with paragraph 8 of the annex to Council resolution 2008 (LX) of 14 May 1976, the thirty-eighth session of the Committee shall be of six weeks' duration.

371. At its 28th meeting, on 3 July 1997, the Committee considered the provisional agenda and the documentation for the thirty-eighth session on the basis of a note by the Secretariat (E/AC.51/1998/L.5).

372. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to submit to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, for their review, the following provisional agenda for its thirty-eighth session:

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.

3. Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations.

   Documentation

   Report of the Secretary-General (General Assembly resolution 45/254 A, para. 17)

4. Programme questions:

   (a) Programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1996-1997;

   Documentation

   Report of the Secretary-General on programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1996-1997

   (b) Medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001;

   Documentation

   Report of the Secretary-General on the proposed revisions to the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (General Assembly resolution 51/219, sect. I, para. 4)

   Report of the Secretary-General on priority-setting, including at the subprogramme level, within the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (General Assembly resolution 51/219, sect. III, para. 2)

(c) Evaluation.

Documentation

Final report on the in-depth evaluation of international drug control (A/51/16 (Part I), para. 55)

Final report on the in-depth evaluation of crime prevention and criminal justice (A/51/16 (Part I), para. 55)

Report on the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations on the in-depth evaluation of peacekeeping: start-up phase

Report on the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations on the in-depth evaluation of the programme on environment

Report to the General Assembly, through the Committee for Programme and Coordination, on strengthening the role of evaluation findings in programme design, delivery and policy directives

5. Coordination questions:

(a) Report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination;

Documentation

Annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1997

(b) Progress report on the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on the progress review on the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001 (A/51/16 (Part I), para. 168)

(c) United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

Documentation

Progress report of the Secretary-General

6. Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit.

7. Provisional agenda for the thirty-ninth session.

8. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its thirty-eighth session.

Notes

[1] A/51/16 (Part II); to the issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/51/16).

[2] Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. 96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

ANNEX I

Agenda for the thirty-seventh session of the Committee

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.

3. Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations.

4. Programme questions:

   (a) Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999;

   (b) Evaluation.

5. Coordination questions:

   (a) Report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination;

   (b) Revised System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development;

   (c) Implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa.

6. Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit.

7. Provisional agenda for the thirty-eighth session of the Committee.

8. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its thirty-seventh session.

ANNEX II

List of documents before the Committee at its thirty-seventh session

A/51/686 and Add.1 and 2	Notes by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled 'Common services at United Nations Headquarters', comments of the Secretary-General on the report, and observations by the Joint Inspection Unit on the comments of the Secretary-General	
A/51/810	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the review of the United Nations Environment Programme and the administrative practices of its secretariat, including the United Nations Office at Nairobi	
A/51/884	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the review of the programme and administrative practices of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)	
A/52/6	Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999	
	Part one (i)	Foreword and introduction
	Part one (ii)	Tables
	Section 1	Overall policy-making, direction and coordination
	Section 2	Political affairs
	Section 3	Peacekeeping operations and special missions
	Section 4	Peaceful uses of outer space
	Section 6	Legal affairs
	Section 7	Policy coordination and sustainable development
	Section 8	Africa: New Agenda for Development
	Section 9	Economic and social information and policy analysis
	Section 10	Development support and management services
	Section 11A	Trade and development
	Section 11B	International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO
	Section 12	Environment

Section 13	Human settlements
Section 14	Crime control
Section 15	International drug control
Section 16	Economic and social development in Africa
Section 17	Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific
Section 18	Economic development in Europe
Section 19	Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean
Section 20	Economic and social development in Western Asia
Section 21	Regular programme of technical cooperation
Section 22	Human rights
Section 23	Protection of and assistance to refugees
Section 24	Palestinian refugees
Section 25	Humanitarian assistance
Section 26	Public information
Section 27	Administration and management
Section 27A	Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management
Section 27B	Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts
Section 27D	Support services
Section 27F	Administration, Geneva
Section 27G	Administration, Vienna
Section 27H	Administration, Nairobi
Section 28	Internal oversight
Section 29	Jointly financed administrative activities
Section 31	Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance

A/51/636-E/1996/104	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Coordination of policy and programming frameworks for more effective development cooperation"
A/52/115-E/1997/47	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Coordination of policy and programming frameworks for more effective development cooperation"
A/C.5/51/53	Report of the Secretary-General on the impact of approved savings measures on the implementation of mandated programmes and activities
E/1997/5	Note by the Secretary-General on the reform of the United Nations and its impact on the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
E/1997/54 and Corr.1	Annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1996
E/AC.51/1997/1	Annotated provisional agenda
E/AC.51/1997/2	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the statistics programme
E/AC.51/1997/3	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs
E/AC.51/1997/4	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on topics for future in-depth evaluation
E/AC.51/1997/5	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the in-depth evaluation of the social development programme
E/AC.51/1997/6	Report of the Secretary-General on the proposed revision to the System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development
E/AC.51/1997/7	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa
E/AC.51/1997/L.1/Rev.1	Note by the Secretariat on the status of documentation for the thirty-seventh session
E/AC.51/1997/L.2/Rev.1	Proposed programme of work for the thirty-seventh session of the Committee for Programme and Coordination
E/AC.51/1997/L.3	Note by the Secretariat on the list of reports issued by the Joint Inspection Unit in 1996 and early 1997

E/AC.51/1997/L.4 and Add.1-43	Draft report of the Committee on its thirty-seventh session
E/AC.51/1997/L.5	Draft provisional agenda for the thirty-eighth session of the Committee for Programme and Coordination: note by the Secretariat
E/AC.51/1997/INF/1	List of delegations

97-20952 (E) 250897